INCREDIBLE HULK
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MAR
MARVEL COMICS GROUP
THE INCREDIBLE HULK
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
TRIMPE
AND NOW... THE ABSORBING MAN!

THE INCREDIBLE HULK!™

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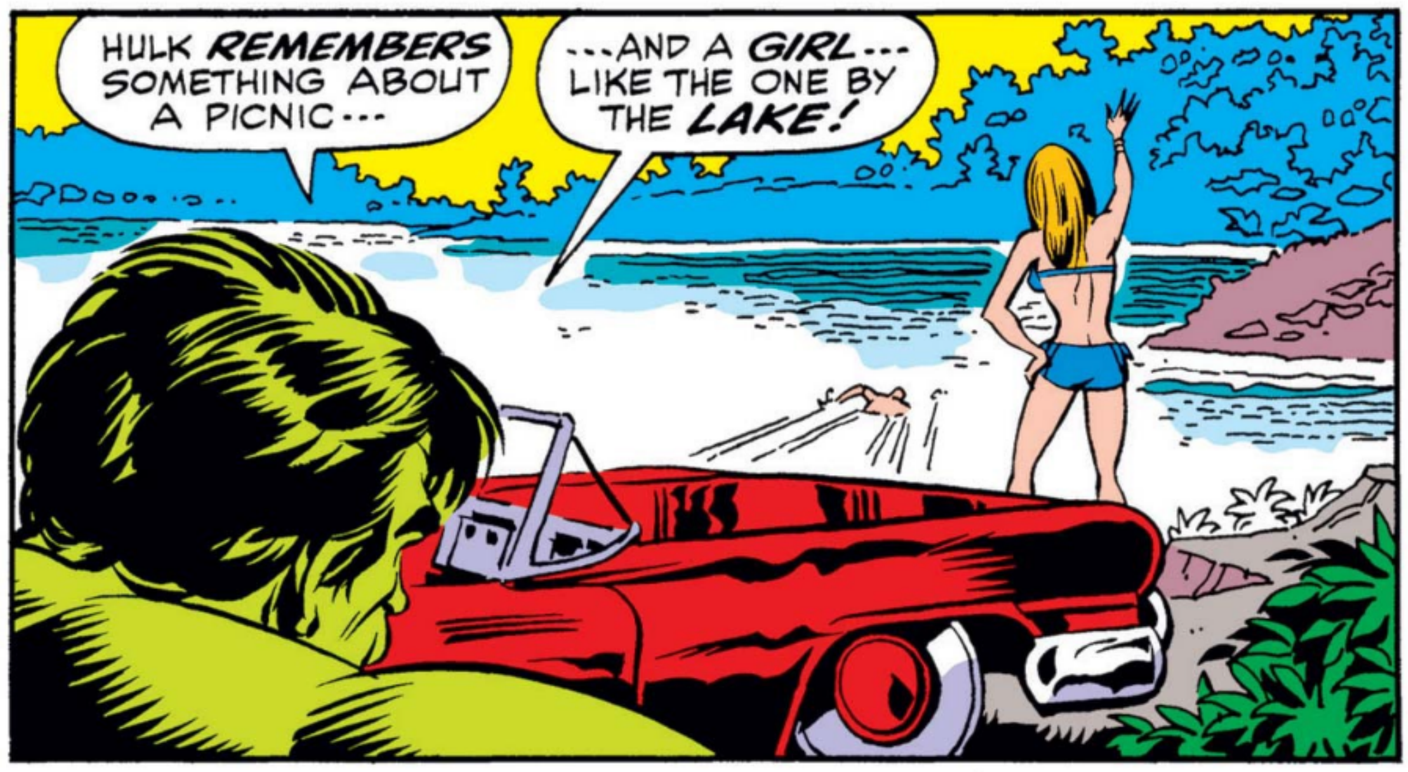
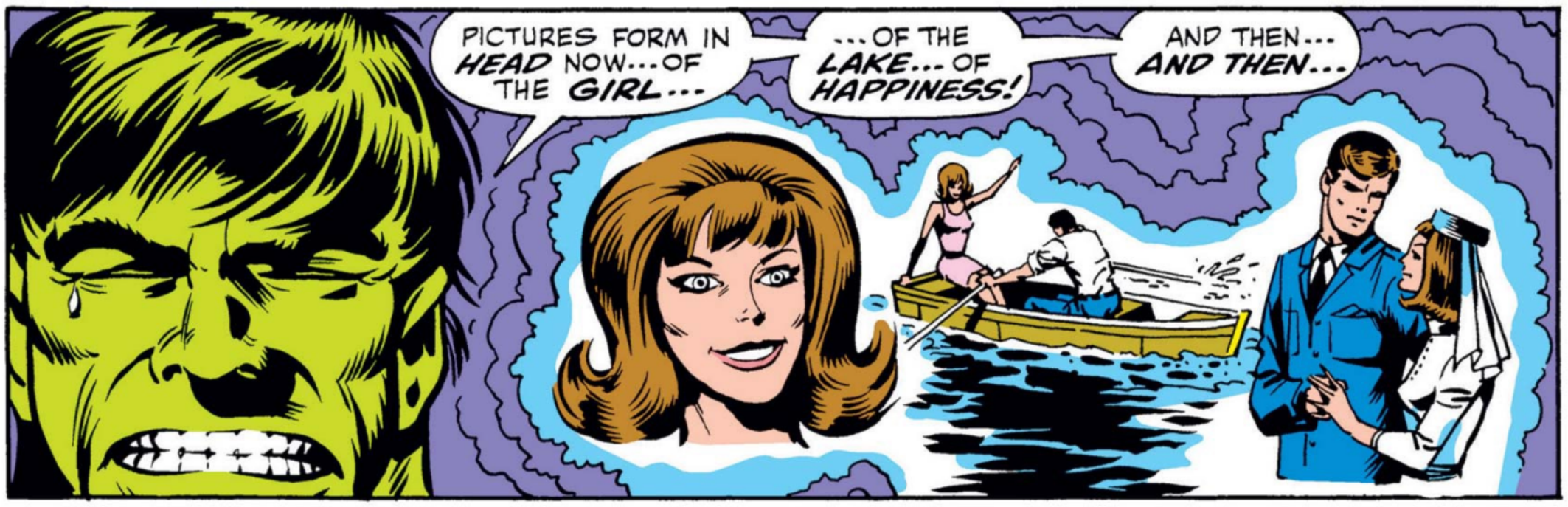
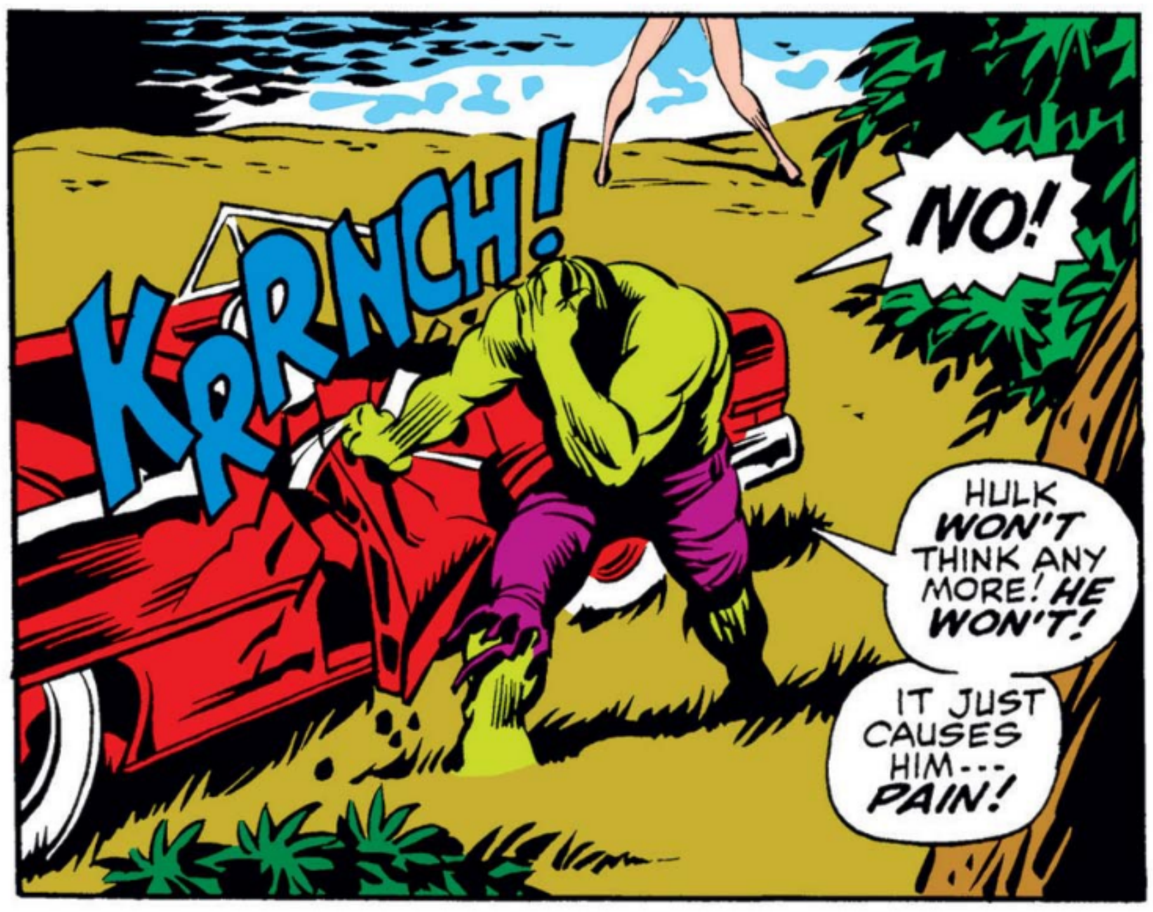
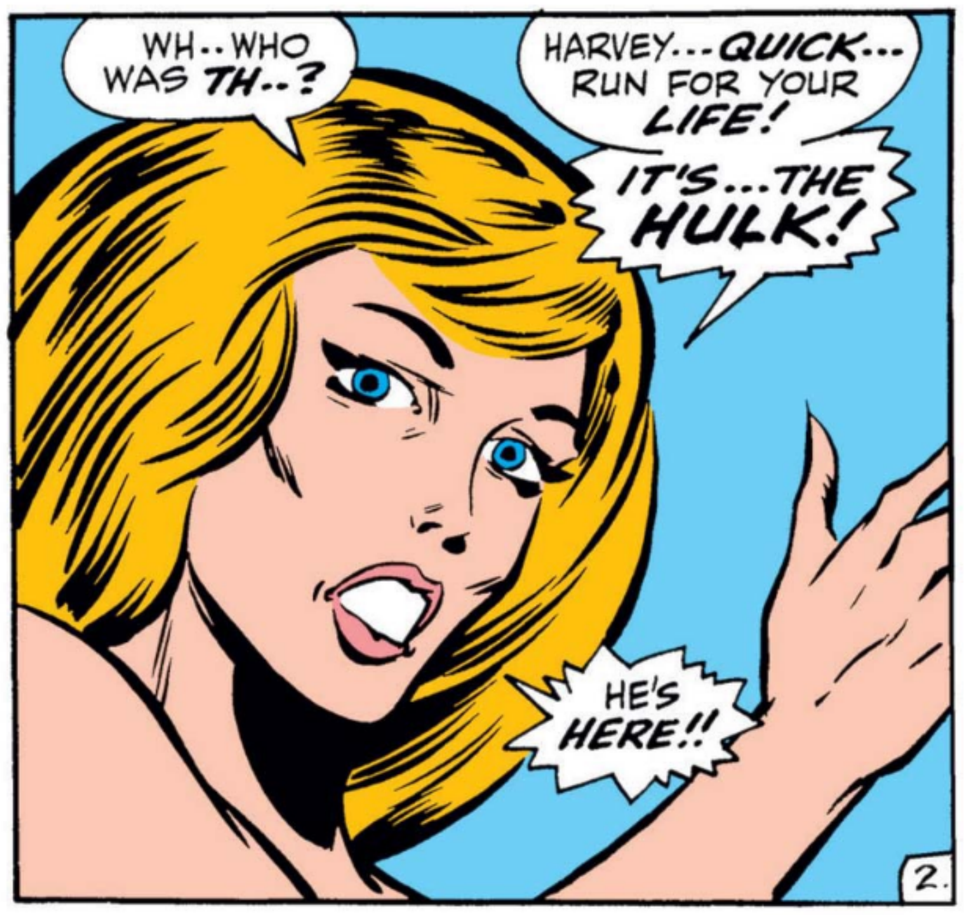
OVER THERE...TWO HUMANS!
ARE THEY A DANGER TO HULK, TOO?
NO... JUST A BOY AND A GIRL... OUT FOR PICNIC!

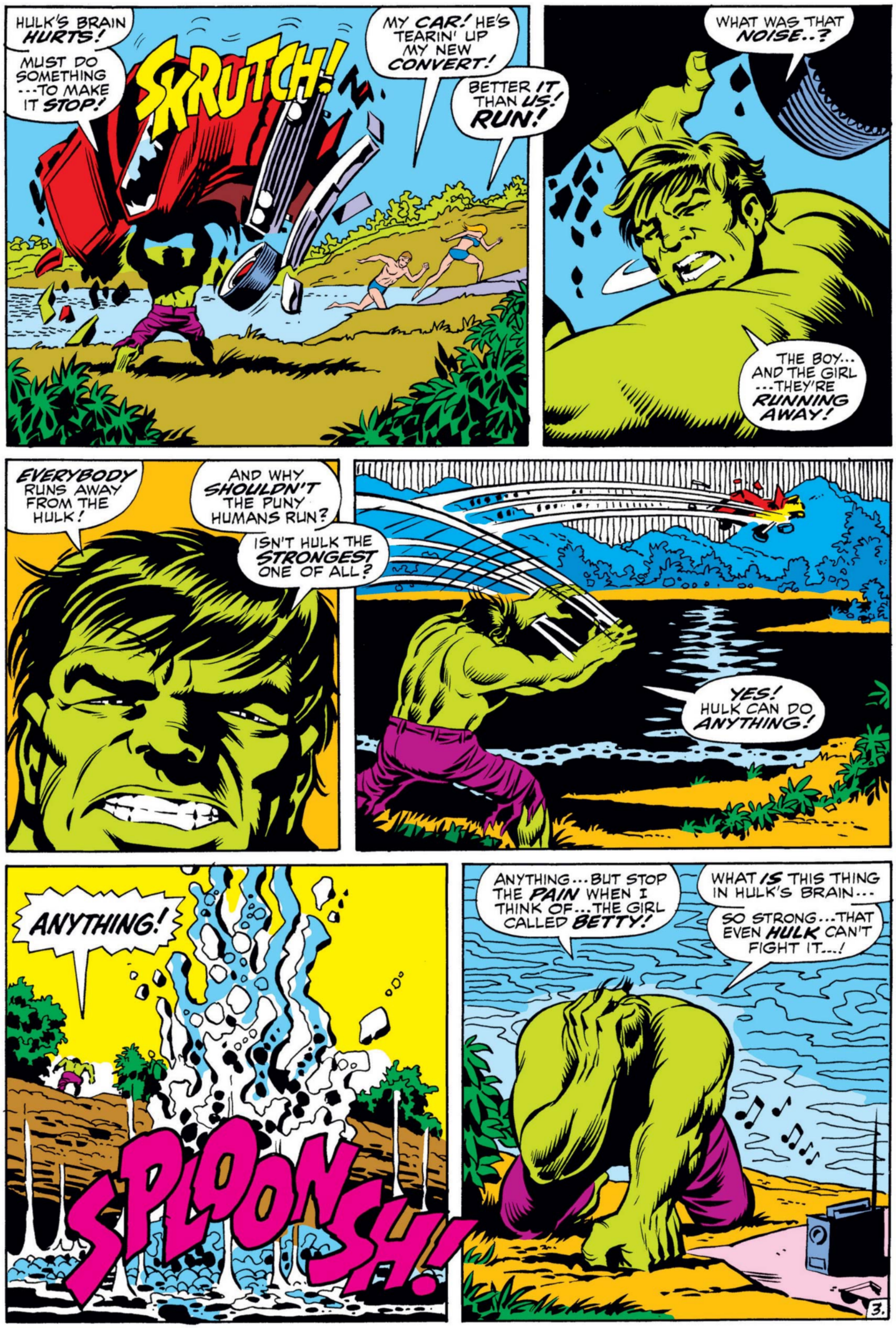

HULK REMEMBERS SOMETHING ABOUT A PICNIC...
...AND A GIRL... LIKE THE ONE BY THE LAKE!

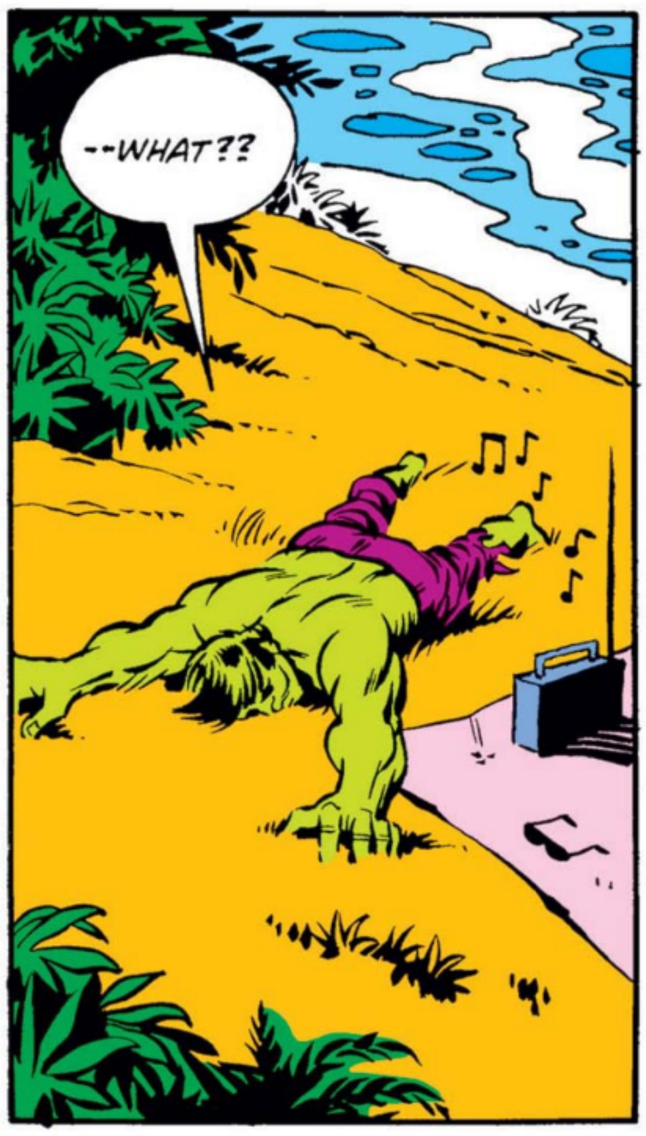
AND... HAPPINESS! HULK REMEMBERS...SOMETHING ABOUT HAPPINESS!
THINK, HULK! WHY IS IT ALWAYS ...SO HARD... TO THINK??

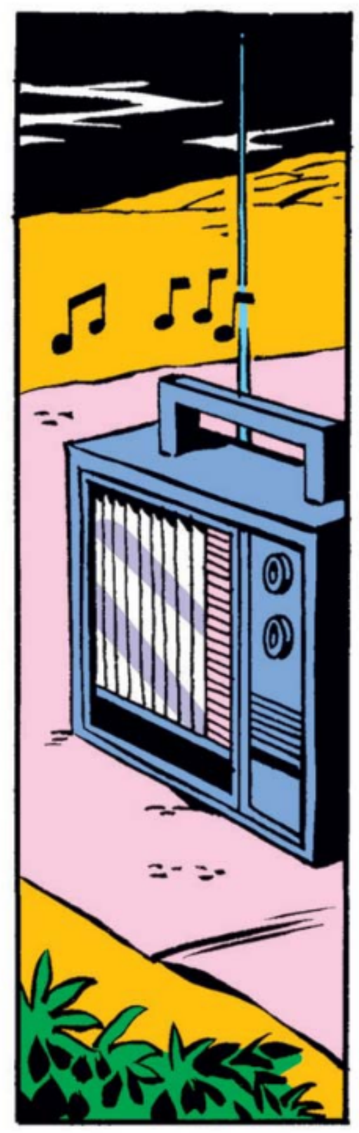

PICTURES FORM IN HEAD NOW...OF THE GIRL...
...OF THE LAKE... OF HAPPINESS!
AND THEN... AND THEN...


KRRNCH!
NO!
HULK WON'T THINK ANY MORE! HE WON'T!
IT JUST CAUSES HIM... PAIN!

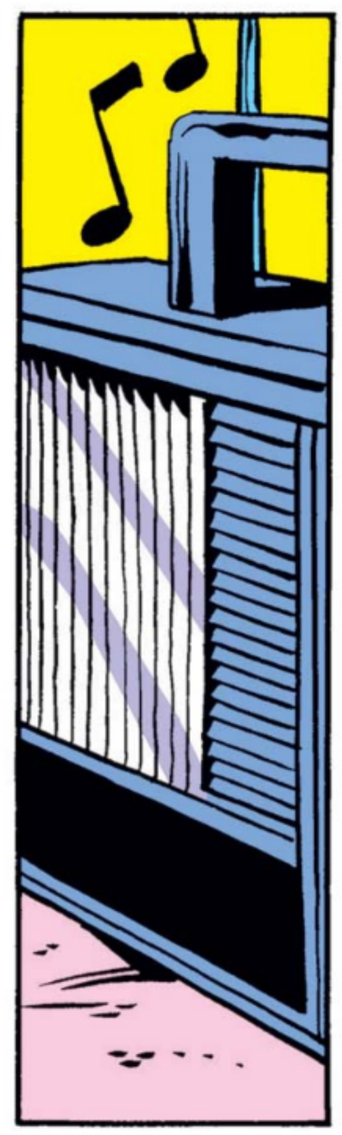

WH..WHO WAS TH..?
HARVEY...QUICK... RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!
IT'S...THE HULK!
HE'S HERE!!
2.


HULK'S BRAIN HURTS!
MUST DO SOMETHING ---TO MAKE IT STOP!
SKRUTCH!
MY CAR! HE'S TEARIN' UP MY NEW CONVERT!
BETTER IT THAN US! RUN!
WHAT WAS THAT NOISE..?
THE BOY... AND THE GIRL ---THEY'RE RUNNING AWAY!
EVERYBODY RUNS AWAY FROM THE HULK!
AND WHY SHOULDN'T THE PUNY HUMANS RUN?
ISN'T HULK THE STRONGEST ONE OF ALL?
YES! HULK CAN DO ANYTHING!
ANYTHING!
SPLOONSH!
ANYTHING...BUT STOP THE PAIN WHEN I THINK OF...THE GIRL CALLED BETTY!
WHAT IS THIS THING IN HULK'S BRAIN...
SO STRONG...THAT EVEN HULK CAN'T FIGHT IT...!
3.

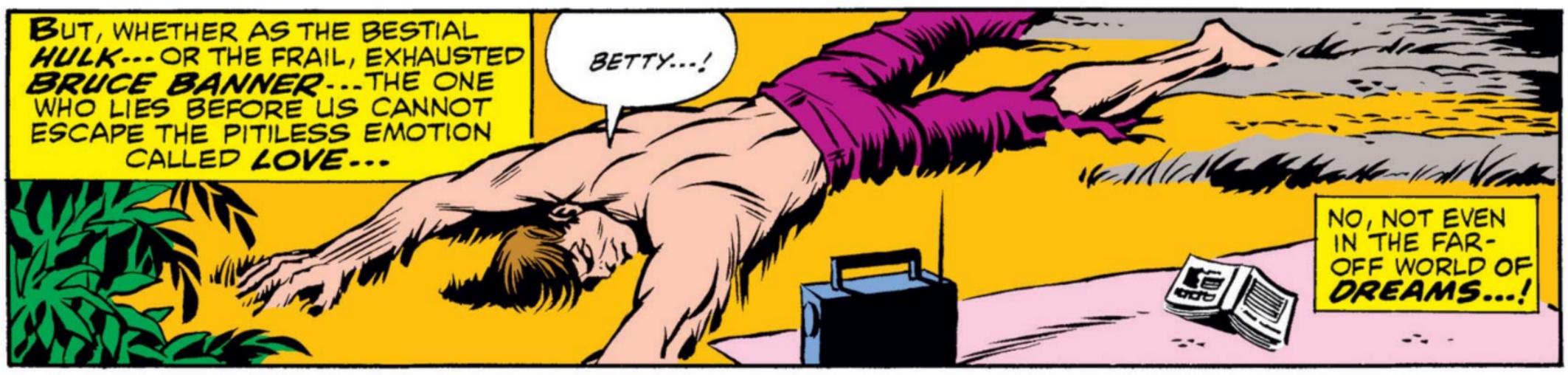

--WHAT??



MUSIC, THEY SAY...

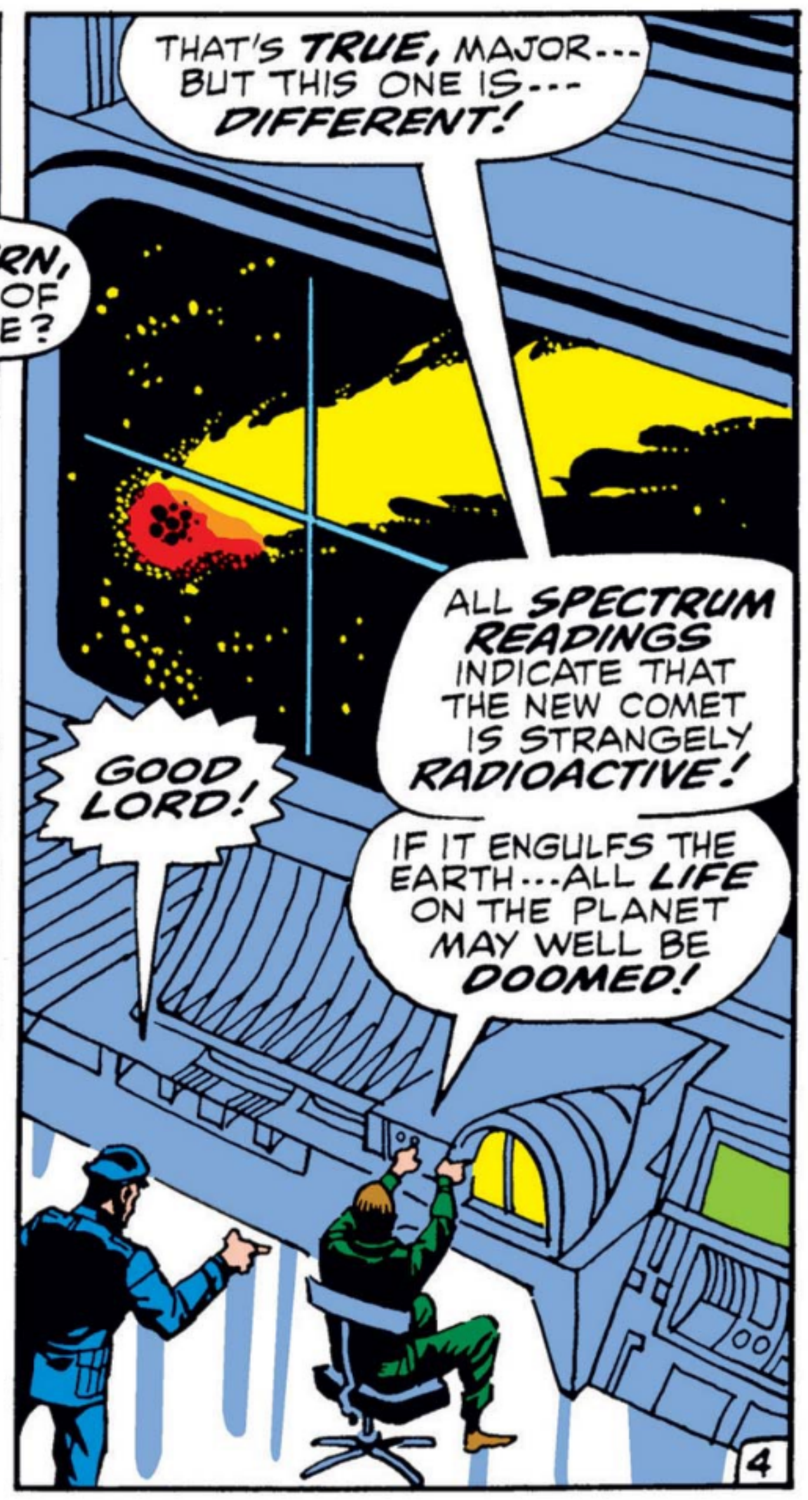


...HATH CHARMS TO SOOTHE THE SAVAGE BREAST...!


BUT, WHETHER AS THE BESTIAL HULK---OR THE FRAIL, EXHAUSTED BRUCE BANNER---THE ONE WHO LIES BEFORE US CANNOT ESCAPE THE PITILESS EMOTION CALLED LOVE---
BETTY...!
NO, NOT EVEN IN THE FAR-OFF WORLD OF DREAMS...!

MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, AT A CERTAIN CALIFORNIA AIR FORCE BASE, THERE IS NO REST FOR THE WEARY...!
IT'S CONFIRMED, MAJOR TALBOT!
04

THERE'S A GIGANTIC COMET HEADING TOWARDS THE EARTH ---FROM A POINT IN SPACE WHERE THERE WAS NONE, A FEW HOURS AGO!
BUT, WHY THE CONCERN, MAN? WHY THE NOTE OF FEAR IN YOUR VOICE?
THE EARTH HAS PASSED THRU THE TAILS OF COMETS BEFORE!
USAF
SCHWARTZBERG


THAT'S TRUE, MAJOR--- BUT THIS ONE IS--- DIFFERENT!
ALL SPECTRUM READINGS INDICATE THAT THE NEW COMET IS STRANGELY RADIOACTIVE!
GOOD LORD!
IF IT ENGULFS THE EARTH...ALL LIFE ON THE PLANET MAY WELL BE DOOMED!

IN THE NEXT HALF HOUR, THE MAN WHO IS THE TRUSTED ***AIDE*** OF GENERAL "THUNDERBOLT" ROSS EXAMINES THE FULL, FATEFUL ***DATA*** FROM THE MOST MODERN OF SCIENTIFIC SOURCES...!

IT'S ***TRUE!*** THERE'S NO ***ESCAPING*** YOUR CONCLUSIONS!

THE EARTH MAY HAVE...ONLY A FEW SHORT ***HOURS*** TO LIVE!!

THUS, SOON AFTERWARD, IT IS A ***DOUBLY***-WORRIED GLENN TALBOT WHO HASTENS TO THE BASE'S ***MEDICAL CENTER***...

IF ONLY WE HADN'T COME TO CALIFORNIA, SO BETTY COULD BE MARRIED IN THE ***FAMILY HOME!***

NOW, HE'S ***HURT***...TOO WEAK TO BE ***MOVED!***

AND, I FEEL SO ***HELPLESS*** HERE...ON A BASE WHERE WE'RE BOTH MERE ***GUESTS***... ***OUTSIDERS!***

BASE HOSPITAL

...I THOUGHT BANNER WAS ***CURED*** OF BEING THE HULK FOR ***GOOD*** THIS TIME!

IS THERE ANY ***WORD*** YET ON HIM...OR ON THE ***HULK?***

NONE, FATHER! I'M AFRAID THAT ***THIS*** TIME...I MAY HAVE LOST HIM ***FOREVER!***

THE WAY HE ***TURNED*** ON US ALL... AND ***DESTROYED*** THE VERY HOUSE...WHERE I WAS ***BORN***...!

UH...MAY ***I*** COME IN, GENERAL ROSS?

TALBOT! OF ***COURSE*** YOU CAN, MAN!

BUT, WHAT IN ***BLAZES***...? YOU LOOK WHITE AS A ***SHEET!***

THEN, IN CHOKED, HALTING PHRASES, THE YOUNG MAJOR ***REPEATS*** THE EVENTS OF THE HOUR JUST PAST...!

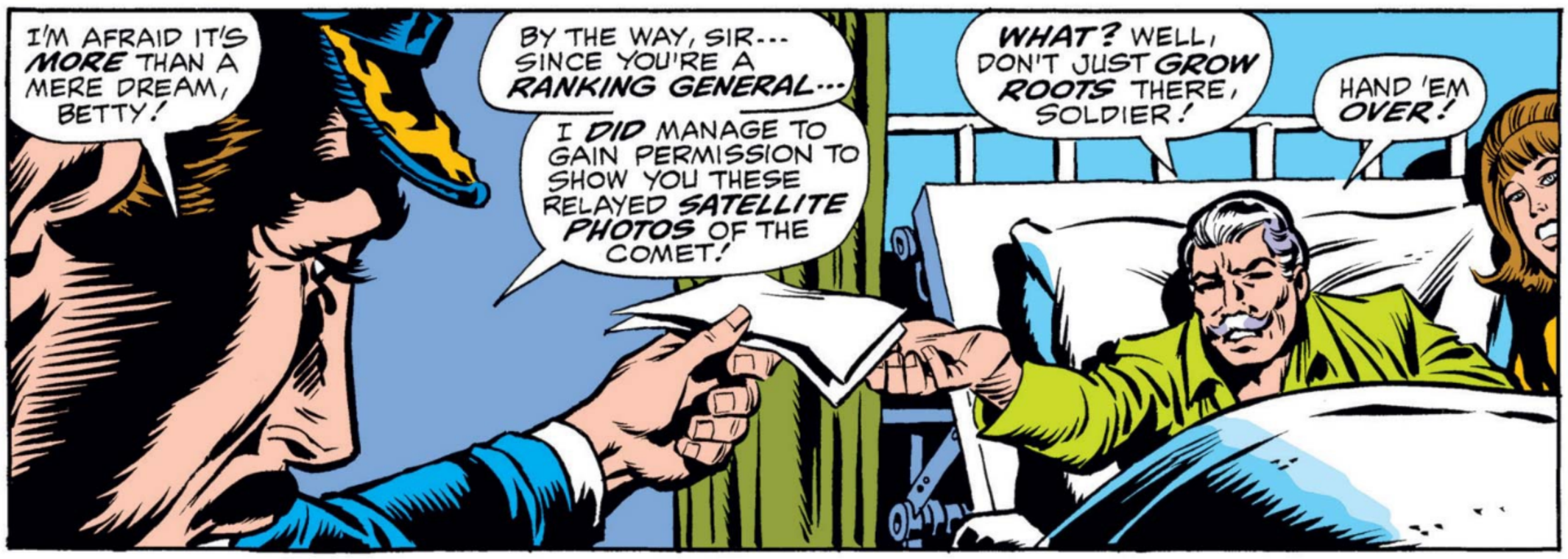
...THE ***PUBLIC*** HASN'T BEEN INFORMED YET, GENERAL!

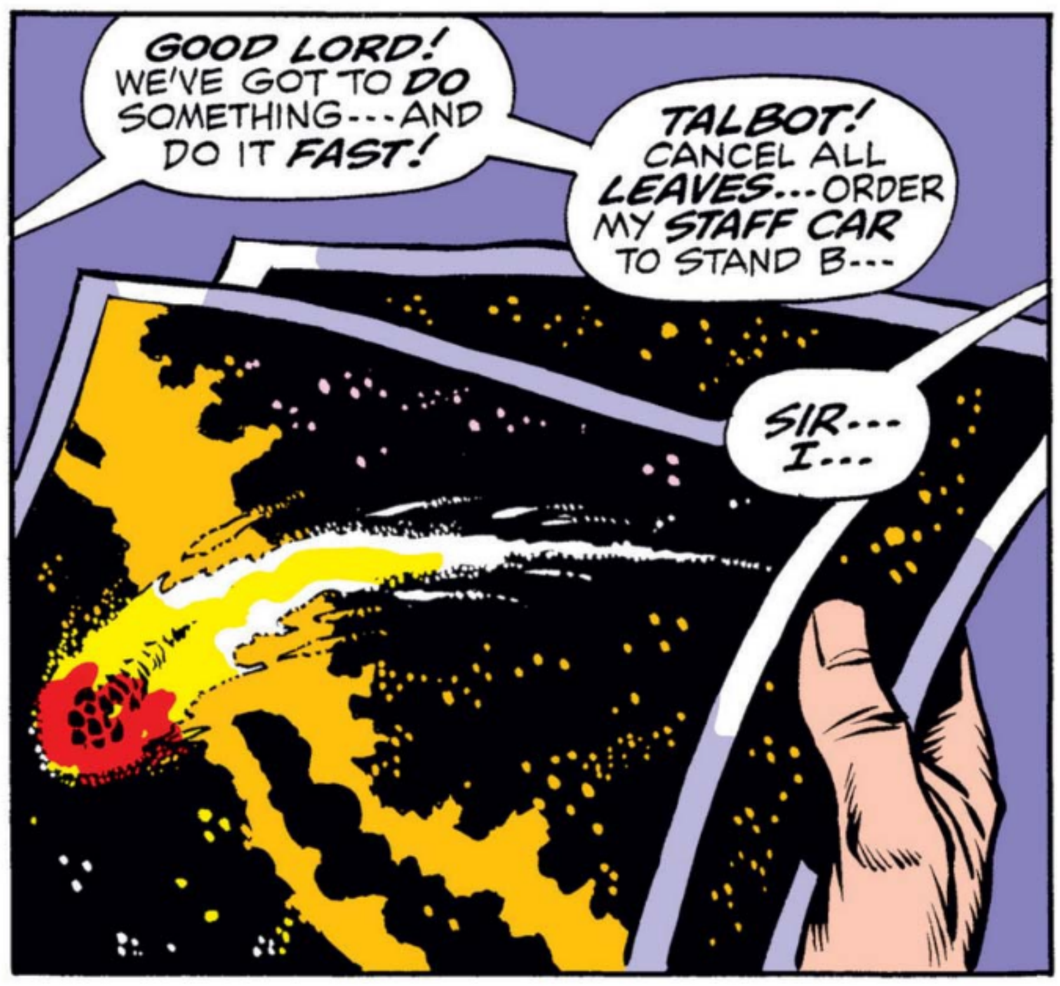
WASHINGTON MUST BE AFRAID OF CAUSING WORLDWIDE ***PANIC!***

PANIC? WHY, MAN... THERE'LL BE ***BEDLAM*** WHEN THIS NEWS BREAKS!

BUT...CAN THEY BE ***CERTAIN?***

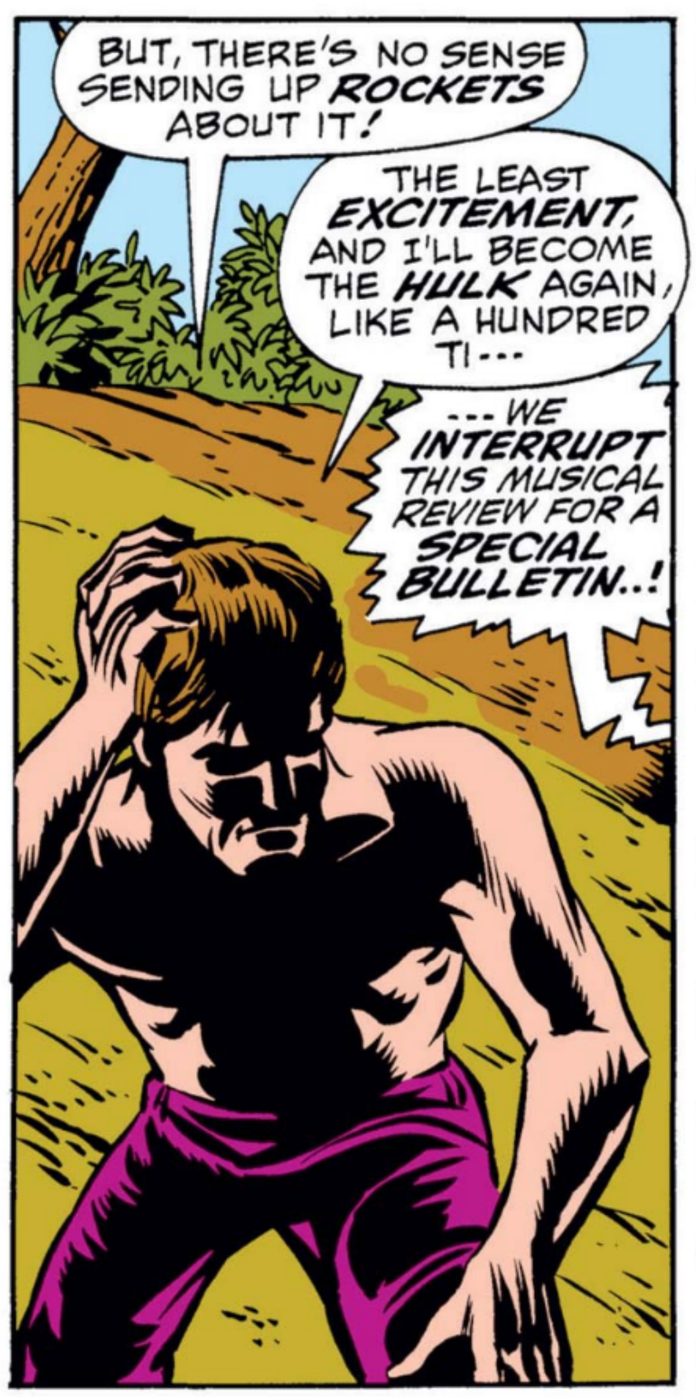
IT ALL SEEMS ...LIKE SOME ***BAD DREAM***..!

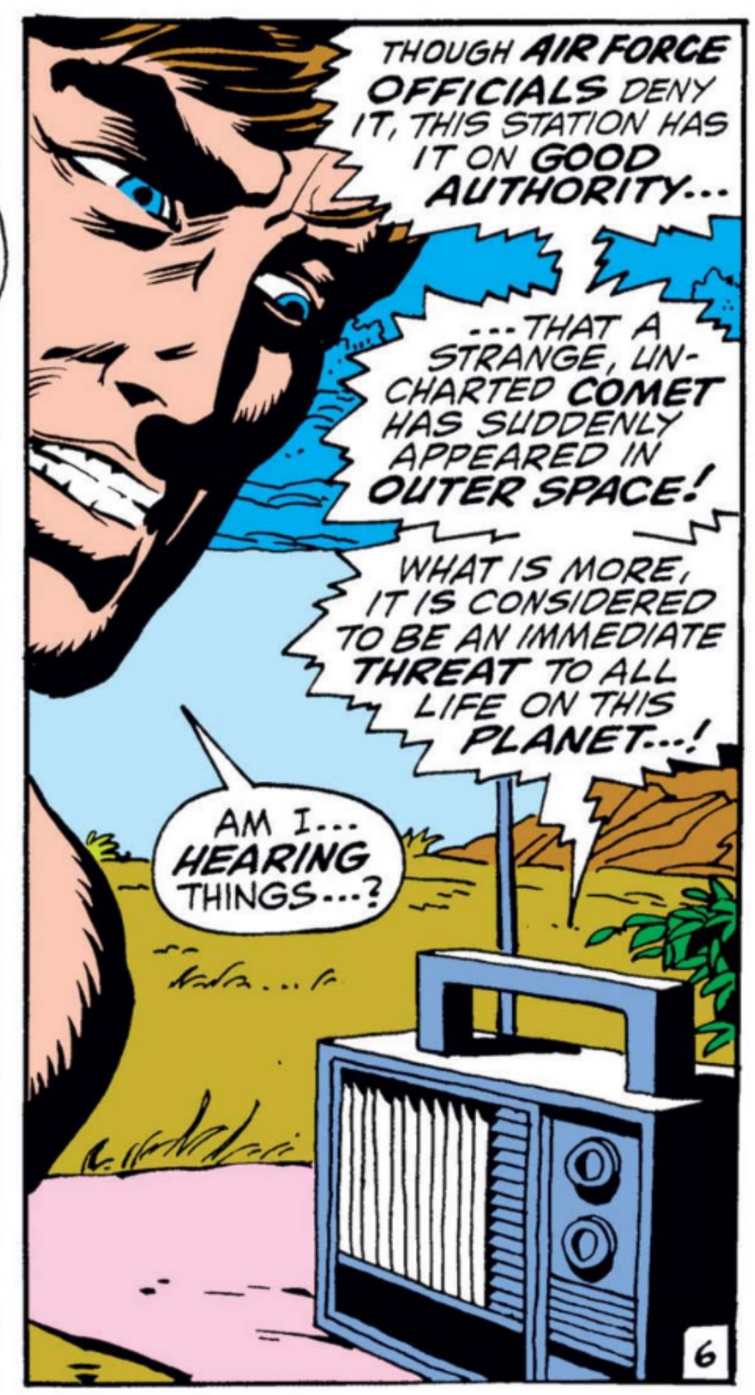

I'M AFRAID IT'S MORE THAN A MERE DREAM, BETTY!
BY THE WAY, SIR... SINCE YOU'RE A RANKING GENERAL...
I DID MANAGE TO GAIN PERMISSION TO SHOW YOU THESE RELAYED SATELLITE PHOTOS OF THE COMET!
WHAT? WELL, DON'T JUST GROW ROOTS THERE, SOLDIER!
HAND 'EM OVER!

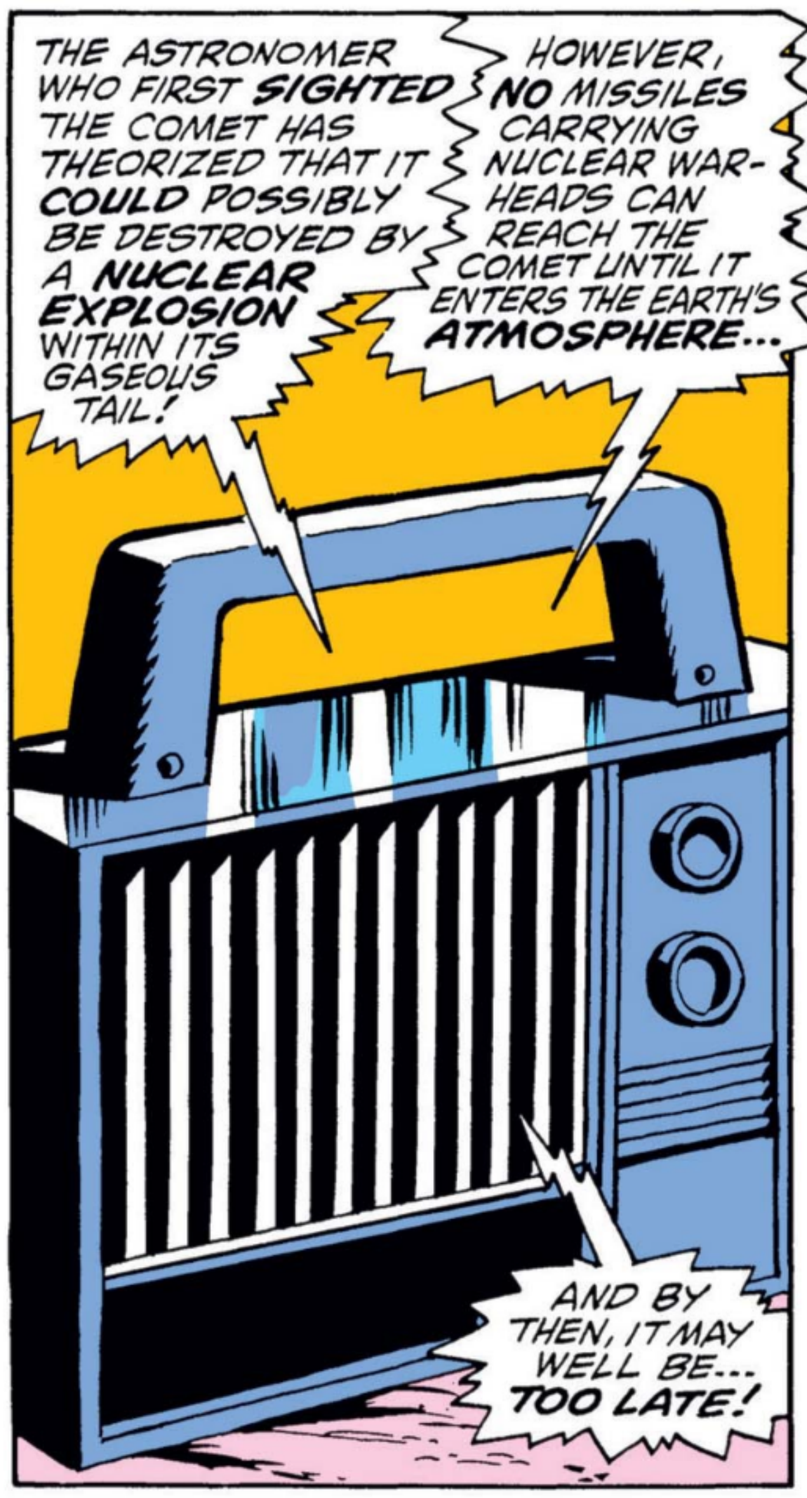

GOOD LORD! WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING...AND DO IT FAST!
TALBOT! CANCEL ALL LEAVES...ORDER MY STAFF CAR TO STAND B...
SIR... I...

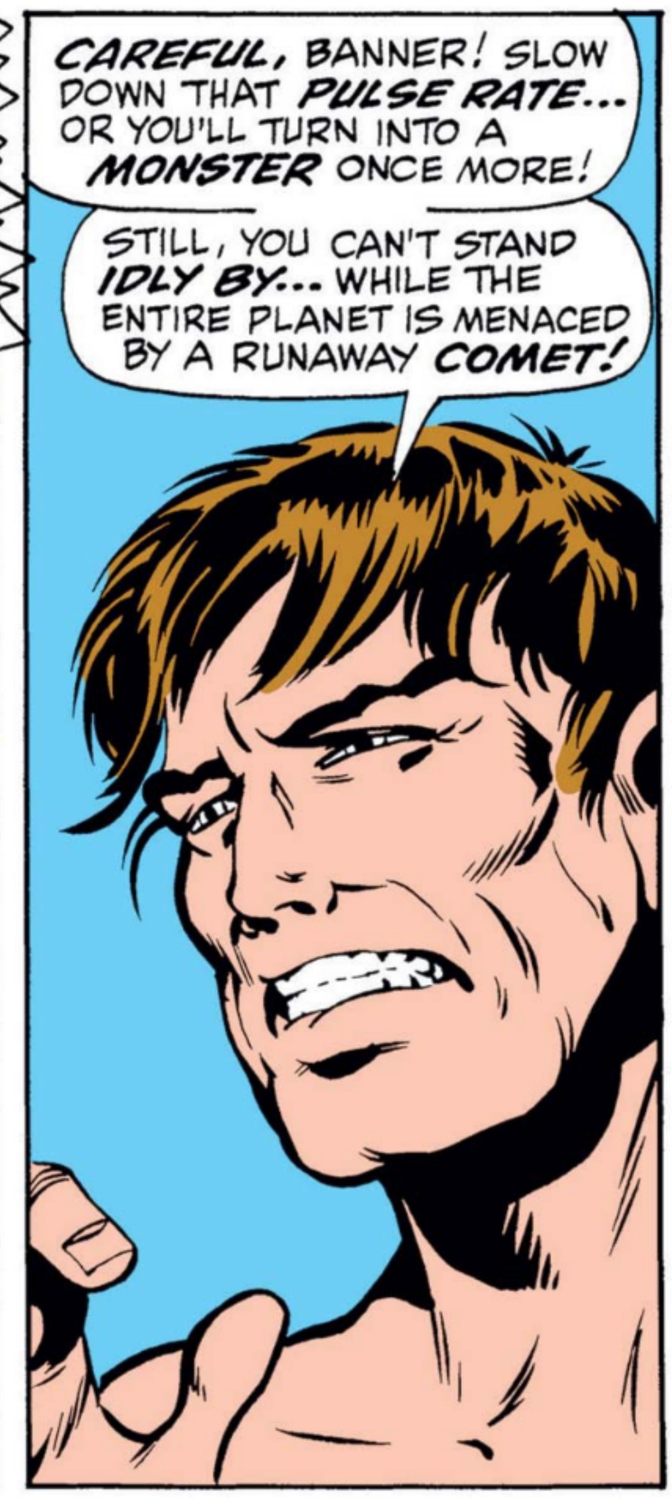
I--I KNOW, TALBOT! I FORGOT FOR A MOMENT WHERE I WAS...AND HOW HELPLESS WE ALL ARE!
IT'S FUNNY...FOR YEARS, I'VE BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO GIVING ORDERS, AND GETTING RESULTS!
AND NOW, SUDDENLY... I JUST FEEL LIKE... AN OLD, OLD MAN...!

WHILE, SOME MILES AWAY...
... NO WAY OF KNOWING...HOW LONG I WAS ASLEEP!
BUT, WHILE I SLEPT, I TURNED BACK INTO BRUCE BANNER!


BUT, THERE'S NO SENSE SENDING UP ROCKETS ABOUT IT!
THE LEAST EXCITEMENT, AND I'LL BECOME THE HULK AGAIN, LIKE A HUNDRED TI...
...WE INTERRUPT THIS MUSICAL REVIEW FOR A SPECIAL BULLETIN..!


THOUGH AIR FORCE OFFICIALS DENY IT, THIS STATION HAS IT ON GOOD AUTHORITY...
...THAT A STRANGE, UN-CHARTED COMET HAS SUDDENLY APPEARED IN OUTER SPACE!
WHAT IS MORE, IT IS CONSIDERED TO BE AN IMMEDIATE THREAT TO ALL LIFE ON THIS PLANET...!
AM I... HEARING THINGS...?


THE ASTRONOMER WHO FIRST SIGHTED THE COMET HAS THEORIZED THAT IT COULD POSSIBLY BE DESTROYED BY A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION WITHIN ITS GASEOUS TAIL!
HOWEVER, NO MISSILES CARRYING NUCLEAR WARHEADS CAN REACH THE COMET UNTIL IT ENTERS THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE...
AND BY THEN, IT MAY WELL BE... TOO LATE!


CAREFUL, BANNER! SLOW DOWN THAT PULSE RATE... OR YOU'LL TURN INTO A MONSTER ONCE MORE!
STILL, YOU CAN'T STAND IDLY BY... WHILE THE ENTIRE PLANET IS MENACED BY A RUNAWAY COMET!

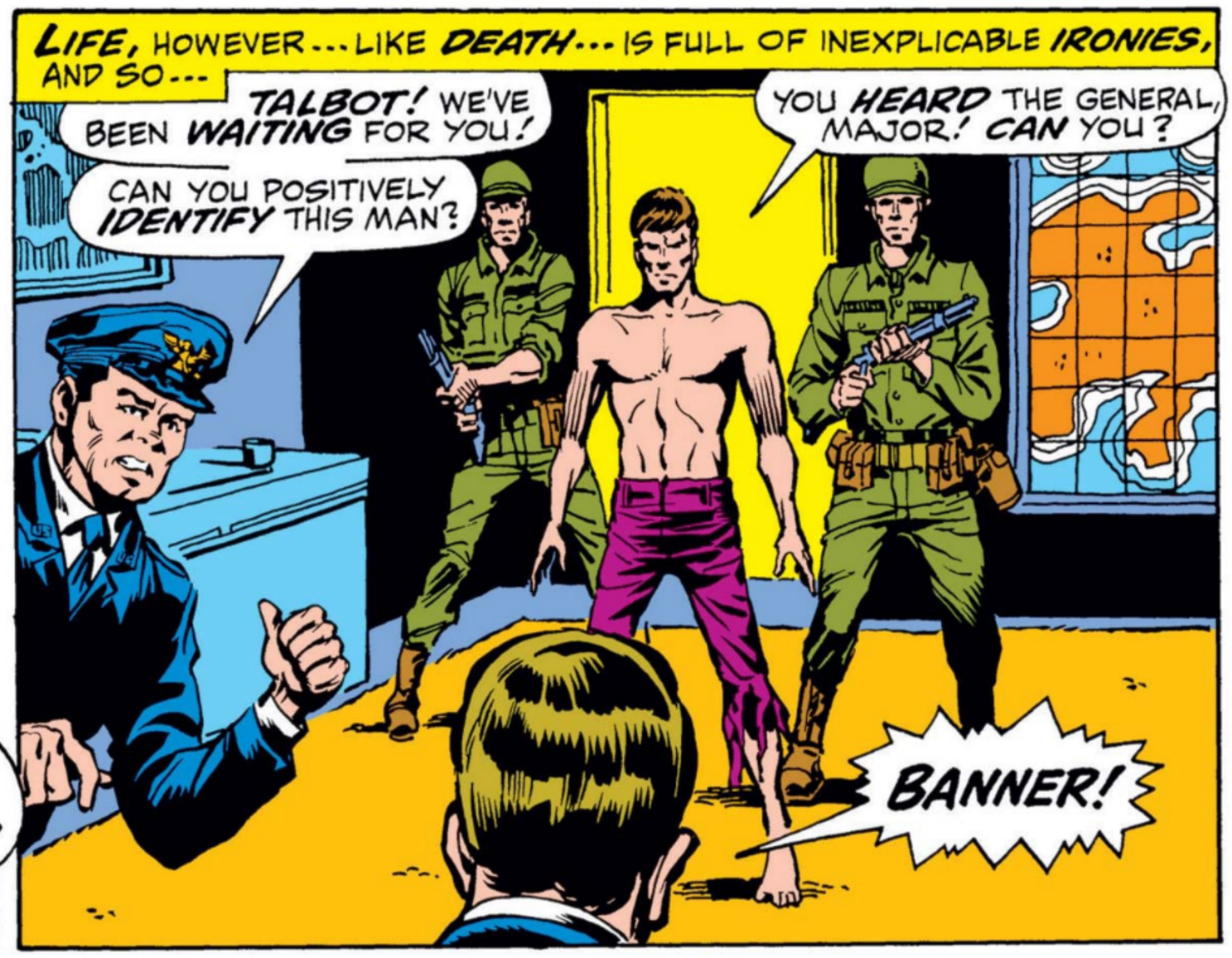
GOT TO MAKE IT TO THAT BASE... VOLUNTEER MY HELP!
SOMEHOW... SOMEWHERE ...THERE MUST BE A WAY TO STOP THAT COMET!
THERE'S GOT TO BE!

YET, IF THERE TRULY IS AN ANSWER TO A WORLD'S DIRE DILEMMA, TIRELESS MINDS WORKING 'ROUND THE CLOCK HAVE NOT YET FOUND IT...!
THAT MAJOR TALBOT IS A REAL WORKHORSE!
HE'S BEEN AT IT ALL NIGHT... WITHOUT A BREAK!
BUT, IT'LL TAKE MORE THAN TRUE GRIT TO BAIL THE EARTH OUT OF THIS ONE!
IT'LL TAKE...A MIRACLE!

CALLING MAJOR TALBOT! CALLING MAJOR TALBOT!
REPORT TO OFFICE OF BASE COMMANDER ...ON THE DOUBLE!

WONDER WHY GENERAL MORRIS WANTS TO SEE ME, OF ALL PEOPLE!
I'M DOING WHAT I CAN... BUT I'M MOSTLY JUST DEAD WEIGHT AROUND HERE!

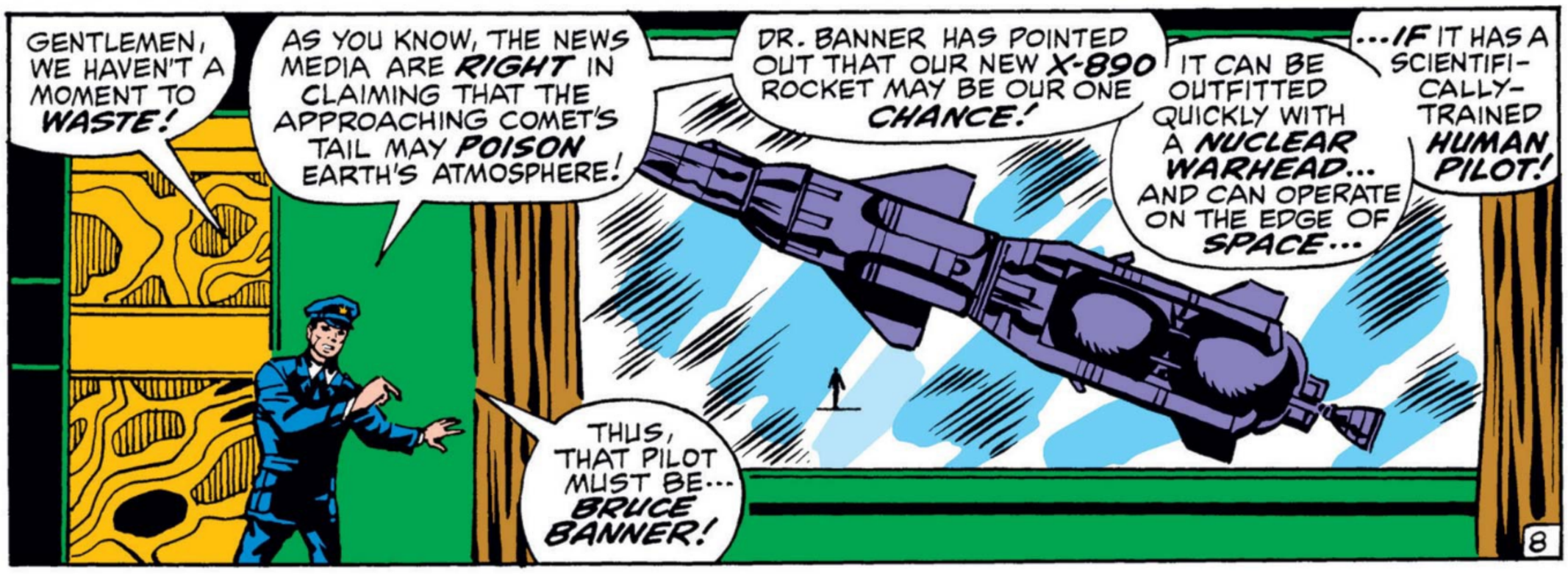
MAYBE IF BANNER WERE HERE, HE MIGHT THINK OF SOMETHING!
I'VE ALWAYS ENVIED HIM BETTY'S LOVE ...BUT THAT NEVER BLINDED ME TO HIS GENIUS!
YET, BOTH HE AND THE HULK HAVE VANISHED!

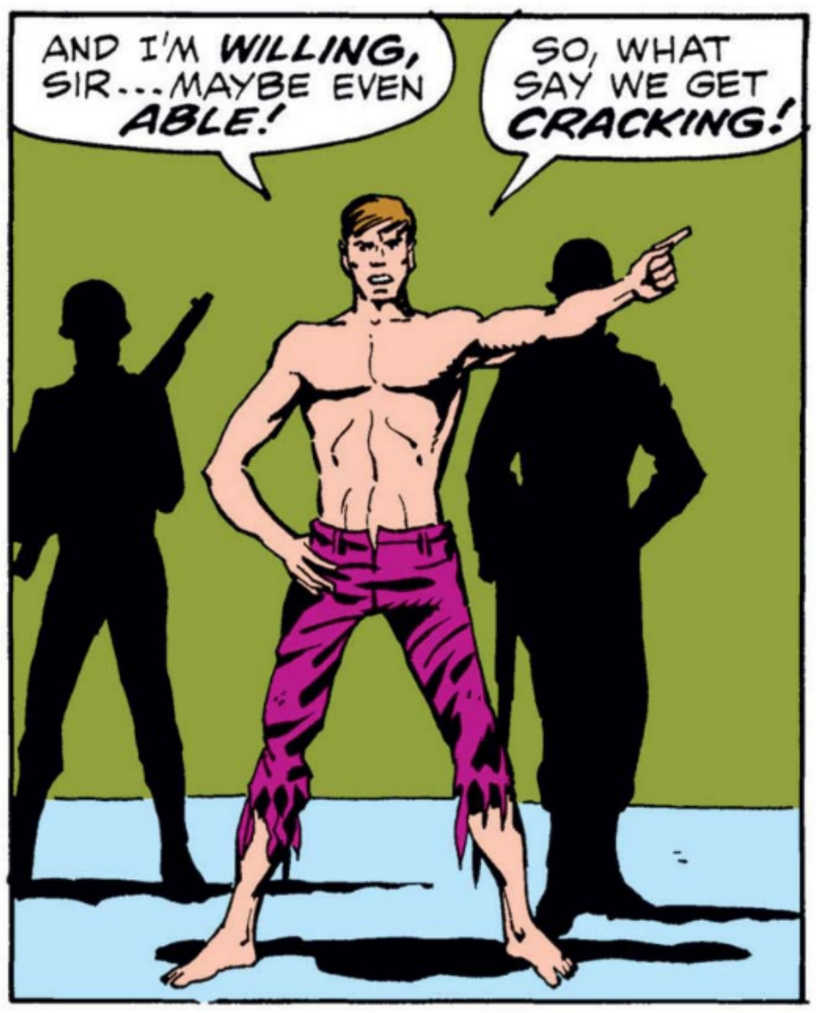

LIFE, HOWEVER...LIKE DEATH...IS FULL OF INEXPLICABLE IRONIES, AND SO...
TALBOT! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!
CAN YOU POSITIVELY IDENTIFY THIS MAN?
YOU HEARD THE GENERAL, MAJOR! CAN YOU?
BANNER!

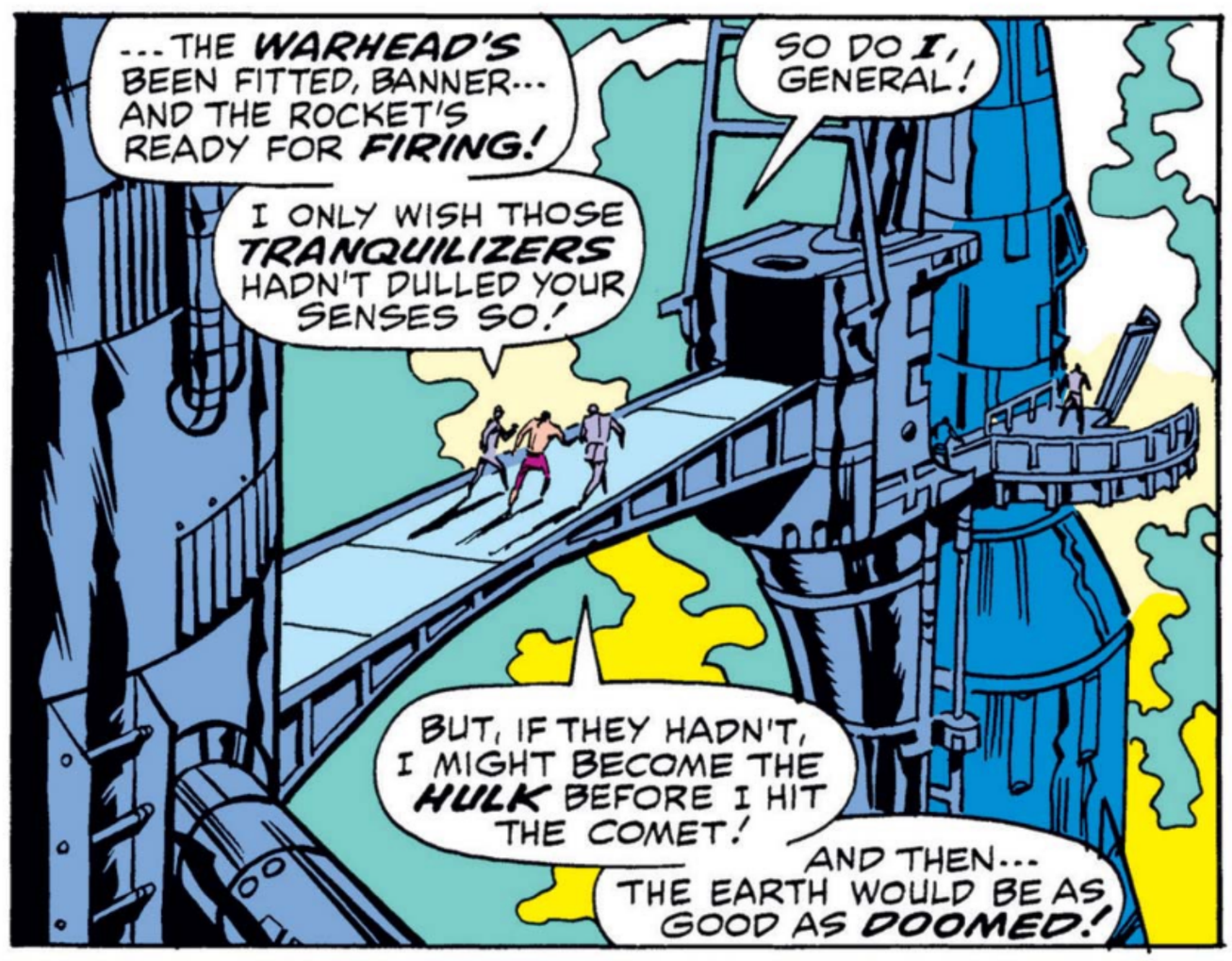
THEN, HE IS DR. BANNER, AS HE INSISTS?
YES, SIR! I'D KNOW HIM ANYWHERE!
BUT HOW CAN YOU LET HIM STAND THERE, SIR...WHEN HE MIGHT BECOME THE HULK AT ANY SECOND?

EASY, TALBOT! I'VE ALREADY REQUESTED GENERAL MORRIS... TO TAKE PRE-CAUTIONS!
IF I WERE ANY FULLER OF TRANQUILIZERS ...I'D PROBABLY... START SNORING!

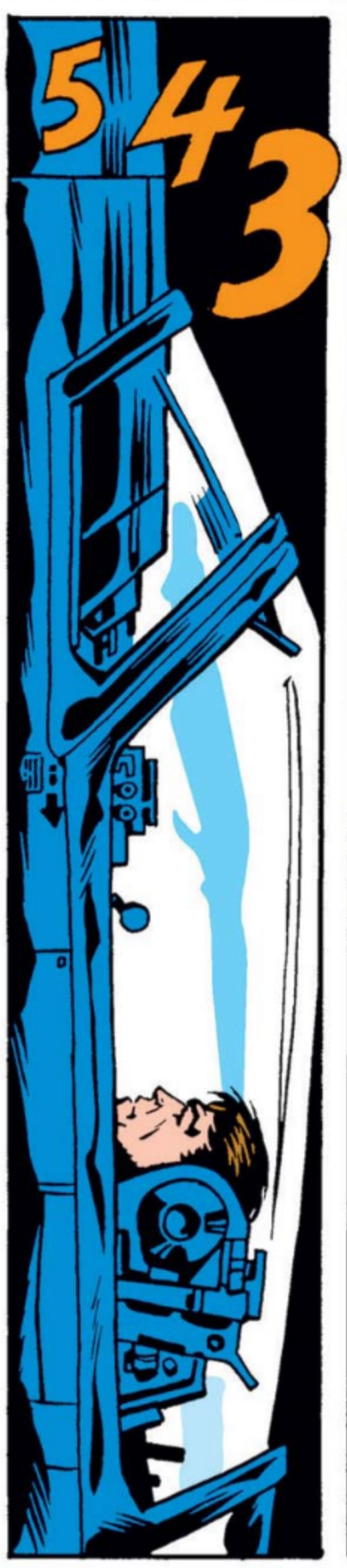
BUT WHY ARE YOU HERE NOW?
CAN'T YOU GUESS, MAN?
SOMEBODY'S GOT TO STOP THAT COMET...FOR ALL OUR SAKES!
HE HASN'T ASKED ABOUT BETTY!
HE MUST NOT REMEMBER HOW HE HARMED HER FATHER AS THE HULK!


GENTLEMEN, WE HAVEN'T A MOMENT TO WASTE!
AS YOU KNOW, THE NEWS MEDIA ARE RIGHT IN CLAIMING THAT THE APPROACHING COMET'S TAIL MAY POISON EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!
DR. BANNER HAS POINTED OUT THAT OUR NEW X-890 ROCKET MAY BE OUR ONE CHANCE!
IT CAN BE OUTFITTED QUICKLY WITH A NUCLEAR WARHEAD... AND CAN OPERATE ON THE EDGE OF SPACE...
...IF IT HAS A SCIENTIFI-CALLY-TRAINED HUMAN PILOT!
THUS, THAT PILOT MUST BE... BRUCE BANNER!

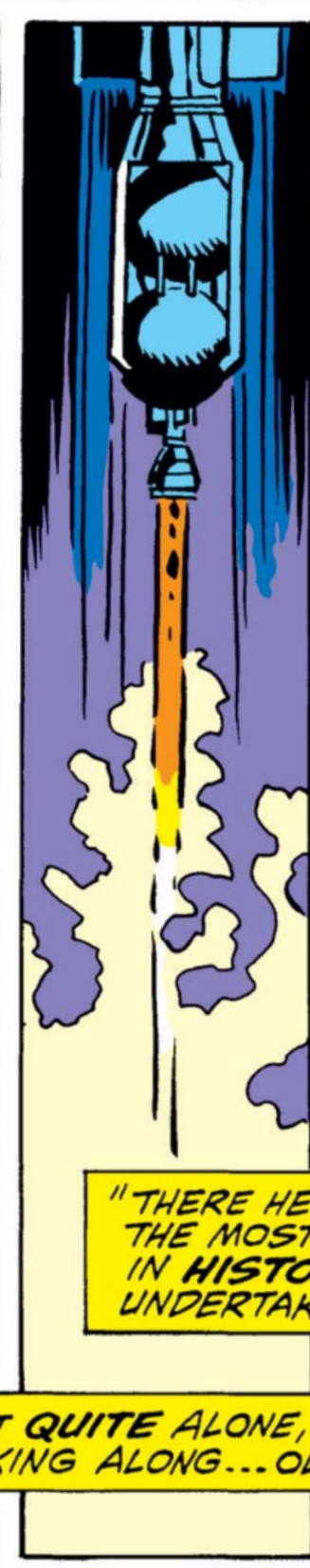

AND I'M WILLING, SIR...MAYBE EVEN ABLE!
SO, WHAT SAY WE GET CRACKING!


...THE WARHEAD'S BEEN FITTED, BANNER... AND THE ROCKET'S READY FOR FIRING!
SO DO I, GENERAL!
I ONLY WISH THOSE TRANQUILIZERS HADN'T DULLED YOUR SENSES SO!
BUT, IF THEY HADN'T, I MIGHT BECOME THE HULK BEFORE I HIT THE COMET!
AND THEN... THE EARTH WOULD BE AS GOOD AS DOOMED!

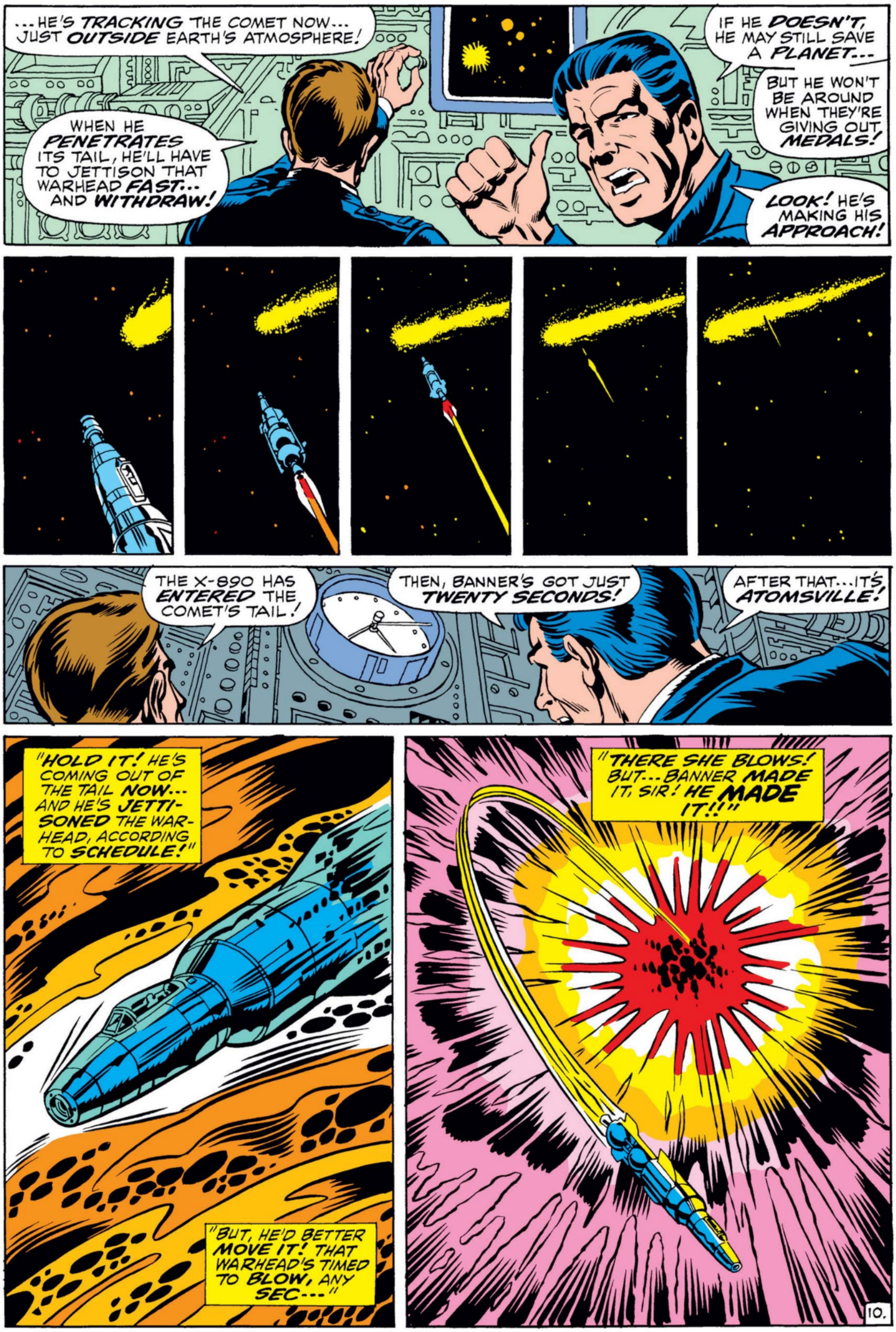
BANNER'S SECURE, INSIDE THE SHIP'S COCKPIT!
TEN SECONDS... AND COUNTING!!
THEN, PREPARE FOR BLAST-OFF!

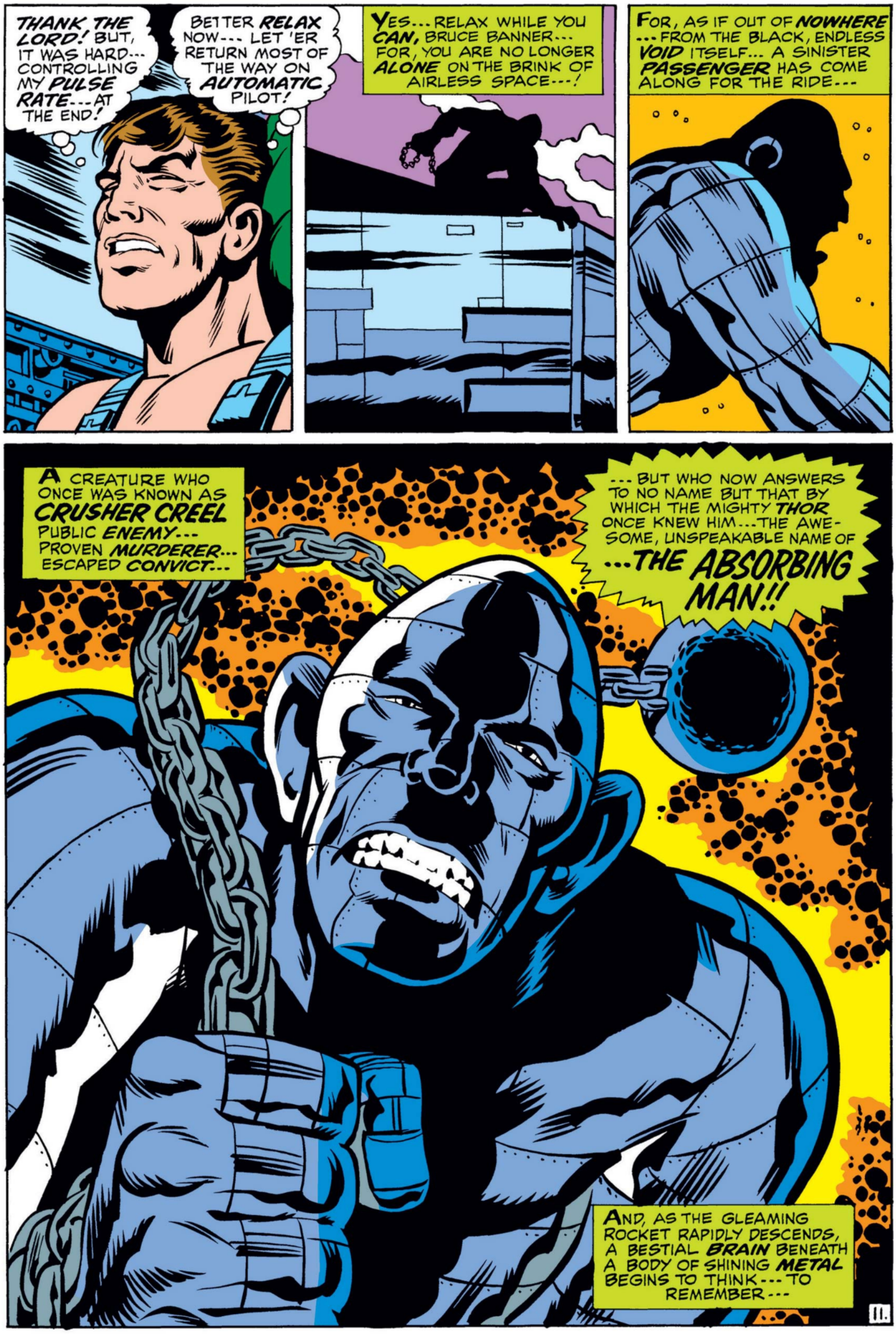

5
4
3

2
1
BLAST OFF!

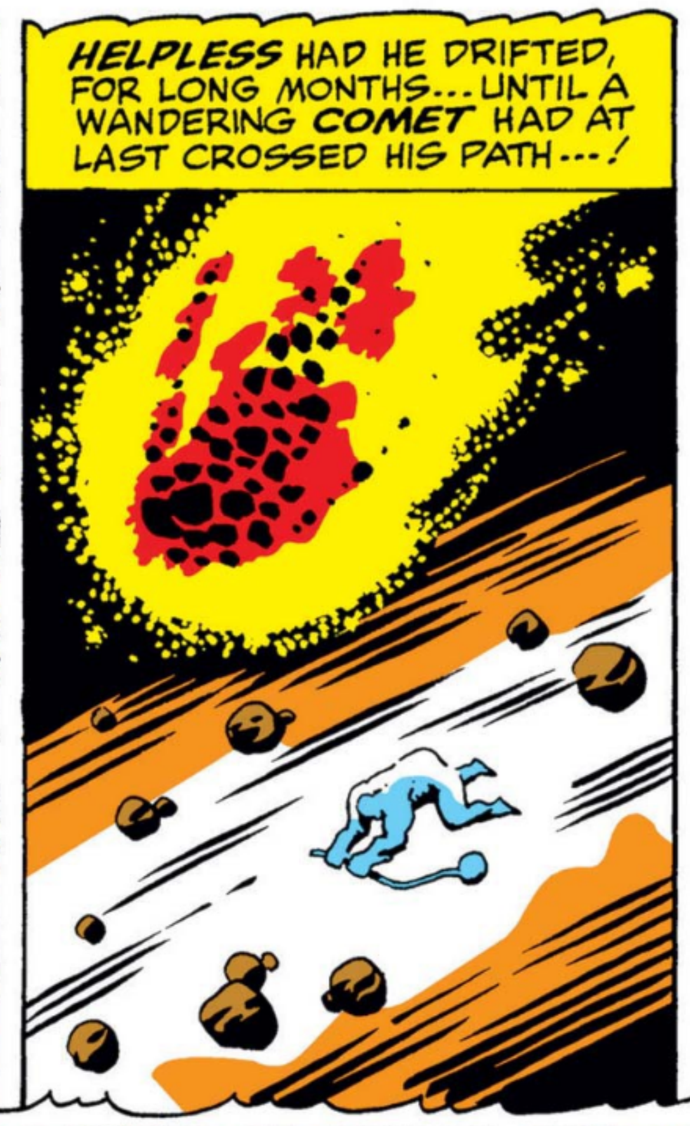


"THERE HE GOES, MAJOR! THE MOST CRUCIAL MISSION IN HISTORY, AND HE'S UNDERTAKING IT...ALONE!"
"NOT QUITE ALONE, SIR! HE'S ALSO TAKING ALONG...OUR PRAYERS!"

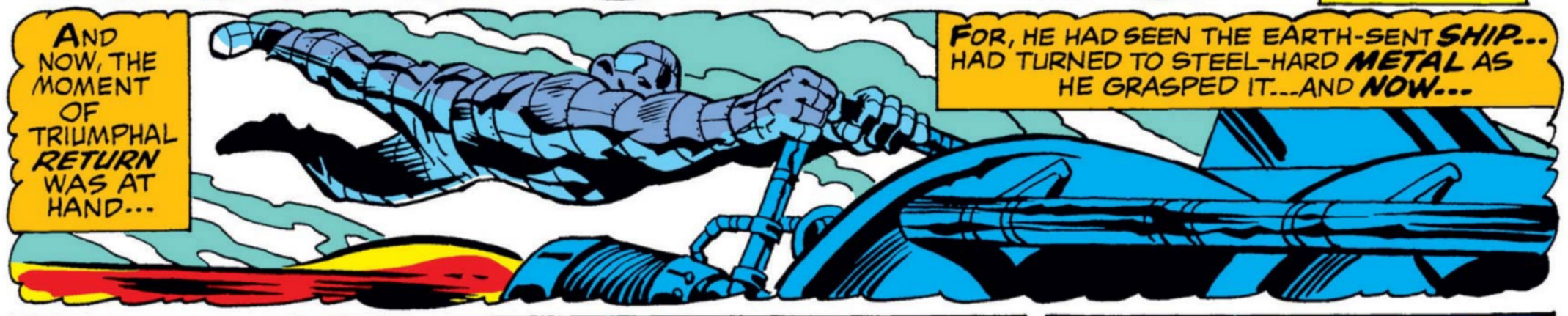

...HE'S TRACKING THE COMET NOW... JUST OUTSIDE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE!
WHEN HE PENETRATES ITS TAIL, HE'LL HAVE TO JETTISON THAT WARHEAD FAST... AND WITHDRAW!
IF HE DOESN'T, HE MAY STILL SAVE A PLANET...
BUT HE WON'T BE AROUND WHEN THEY'RE GIVING OUT MEDALS!
LOOK! HE'S MAKING HIS APPROACH!
THE X-890 HAS ENTERED THE COMET'S TAIL!
THEN, BANNER'S GOT JUST TWENTY SECONDS!
AFTER THAT...IT'S ATOMSVILLE!
"HOLD IT! HE'S COMING OUT OF THE TAIL NOW... AND HE'S JETTISONED THE WARHEAD, ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE!"
"BUT, HE'D BETTER MOVE IT! THAT WARHEAD'S TIMED TO BLOW, ANY SEC---"
"THERE SHE BLOWS! BUT...BANNER MADE IT, SIR! HE MADE IT!!"


THANK THE LORD! BUT, IT WAS HARD... CONTROLLING MY PULSE RATE...AT THE END!
BETTER RELAX NOW... LET 'ER RETURN MOST OF THE WAY ON AUTOMATIC PILOT!
YES... RELAX WHILE YOU CAN, BRUCE BANNER... FOR, YOU ARE NO LONGER ALONE ON THE BRINK OF AIRLESS SPACE...!
FOR, AS IF OUT OF NOWHERE ... FROM THE BLACK, ENDLESS VOID ITSELF... A SINISTER PASSENGER HAS COME ALONG FOR THE RIDE...
A CREATURE WHO ONCE WAS KNOWN AS CRUSHER CREEL PUBLIC ENEMY... PROVEN MURDERER... ESCAPED CONVICT...
... BUT WHO NOW ANSWERS TO NO NAME BUT THAT BY WHICH THE MIGHTY THOR ONCE KNEW HIM...THE AWE-SOME, UNSPEAKABLE NAME OF ...THE ABSORBING MAN!!
AND, AS THE GLEAMING ROCKET RAPIDLY DESCENDS, A BESTIAL BRAIN BENEATH A BODY OF SHINING METAL BEGINS TO THINK... TO REMEMBER...
11.

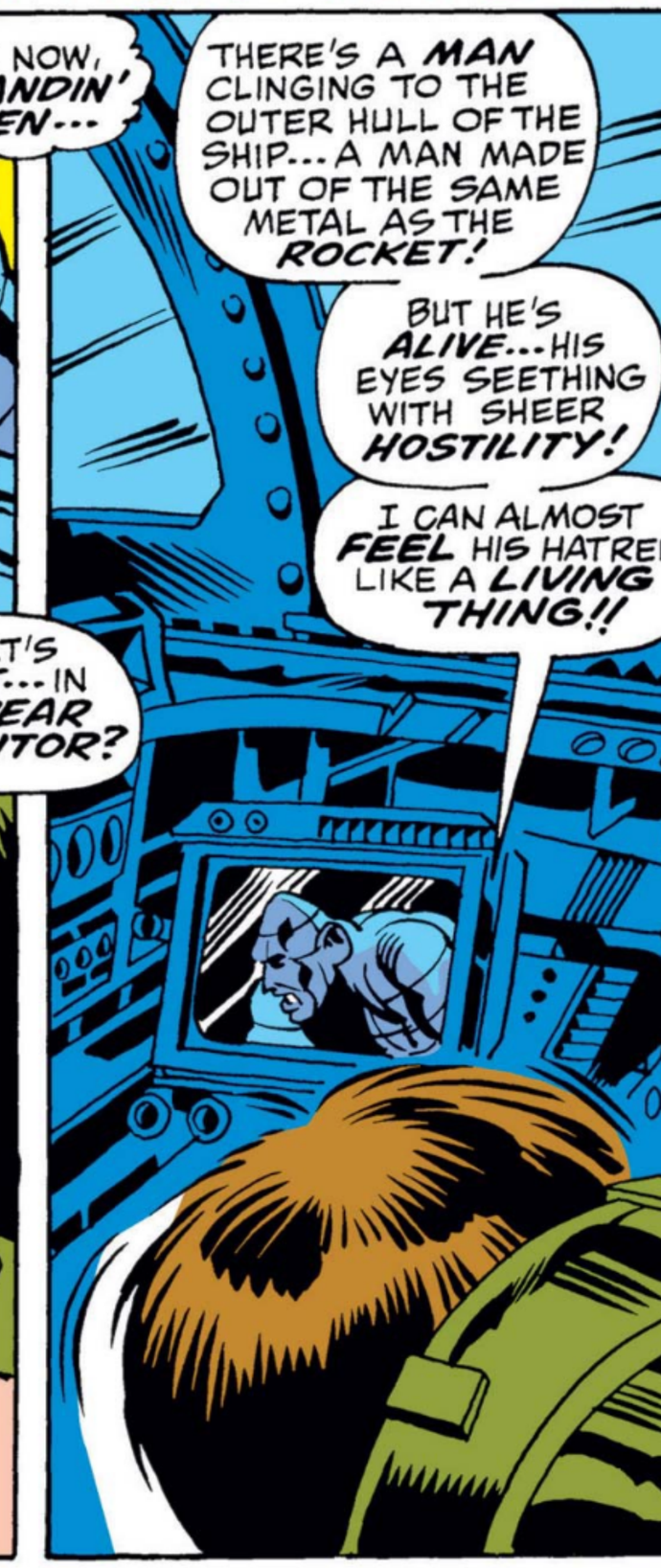
---TO REMEMBER THE FREEZING COLD OF OUTER SPACE---INTO WHICH CRUSHER CREEL HAD BEEN HURLED BY A VENGEFUL ODIN---!*
*AS IMMORTALIZED IN THOR # 123! ---STAN.


HELPLESS HAD HE DRIFTED, FOR LONG MONTHS...UNTIL A WANDERING COMET HAD AT LAST CROSSED HIS PATH---!

THEN, USING HIS GOD-GRANTED ABILITY TO BECOME ANY SUBSTANCE WHICH HE TOUCHED, HE HAD BECOME AS ONE WITH THE COMET---!
HE HAD BECOME ITS MIND, ITS ESSENCE--- STEERING IT NEARER, EVER NEARER TO THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH!

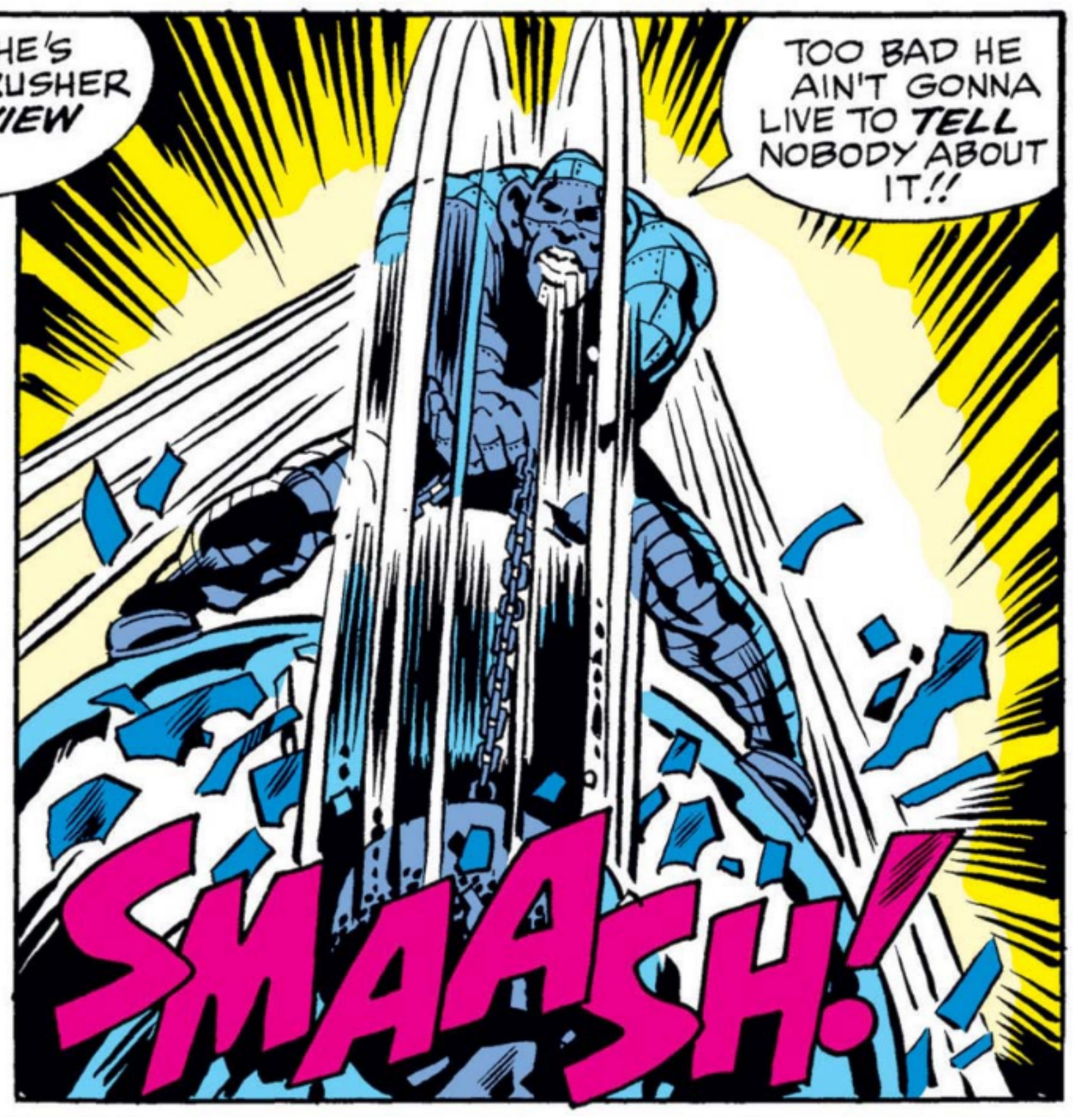

AND NOW, THE MOMENT OF TRIUMPHAL RETURN WAS AT HAND---
FOR, HE HAD SEEN THE EARTH-SENT SHIP--- HAD TURNED TO STEEL-HARD METAL AS HE GRASPED IT---AND NOW---

I'M BACK---AND THE HIGH-AND-MIGHTY THOR'S GONNA WISH I WUZN'T!
ANY MINUTE NOW, WE'LL BE LANDIN' --- AND THEN---
WHAT'S THAT---IN MY REAR MONITOR?


THERE'S A MAN CLINGING TO THE OUTER HULL OF THE SHIP---A MAN MADE OUT OF THE SAME METAL AS THE ROCKET!
BUT HE'S ALIVE---HIS EYES SEETHING WITH SHEER HOSTILITY!
I CAN ALMOST FEEL HIS HATRED--- LIKE A LIVING THING!!

OH NO---NO--- I SHOULDN'T HAVE ALLOWED MYSELF --- TO BECOME EXCITED!
NOW I'M CHANGING ---BECOMING ONCE AGAIN THE MONSTER THAT DWELLS WITHIN THE MAN--!

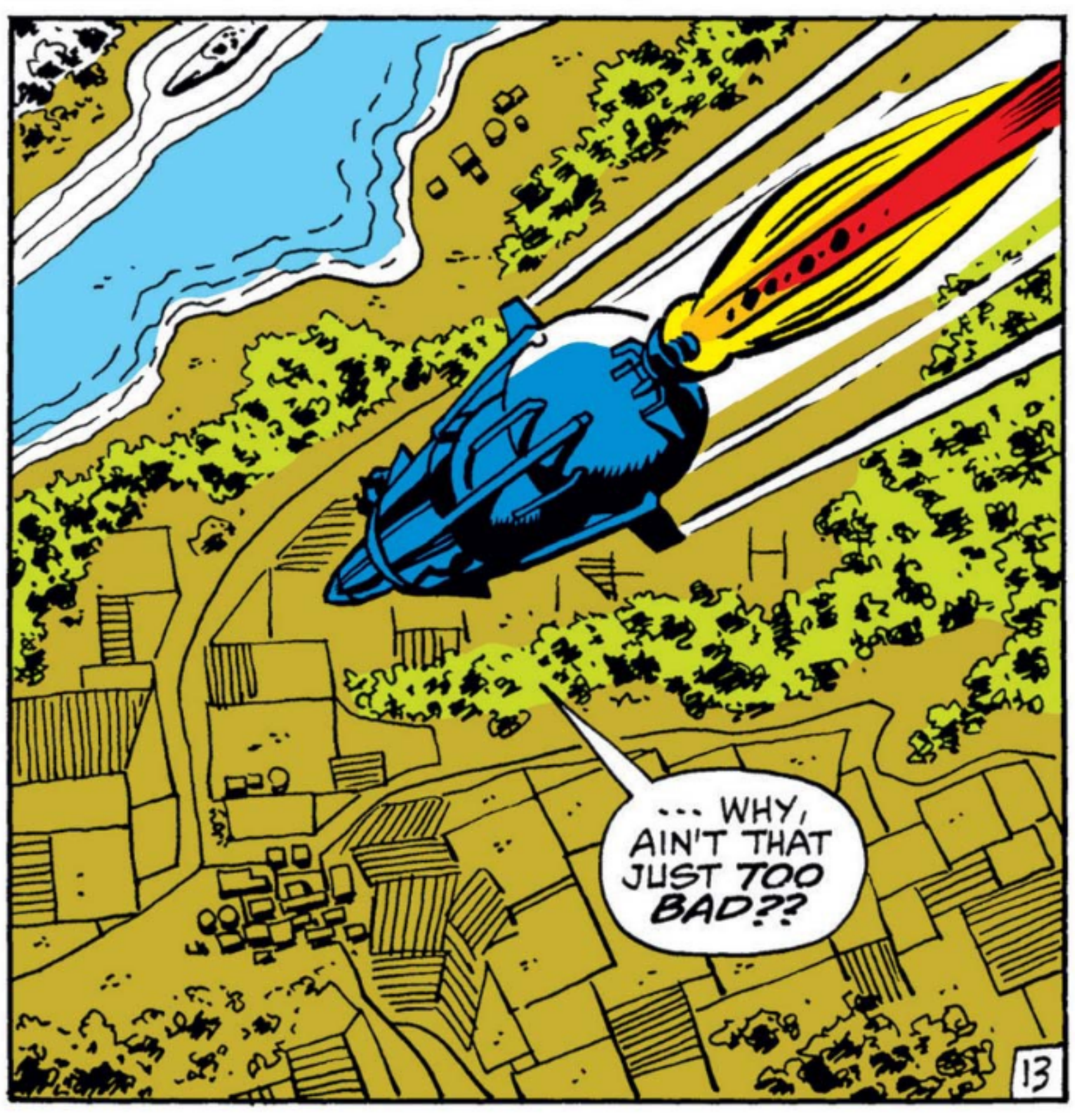
FROM THE WAY THAT MILQUETOAST INSIDE IS ACTIN'...
IT'S A SURE BET HE'S SPOTTED OL' CRUSHER IN HIS REAR-VIEW MIRROR!

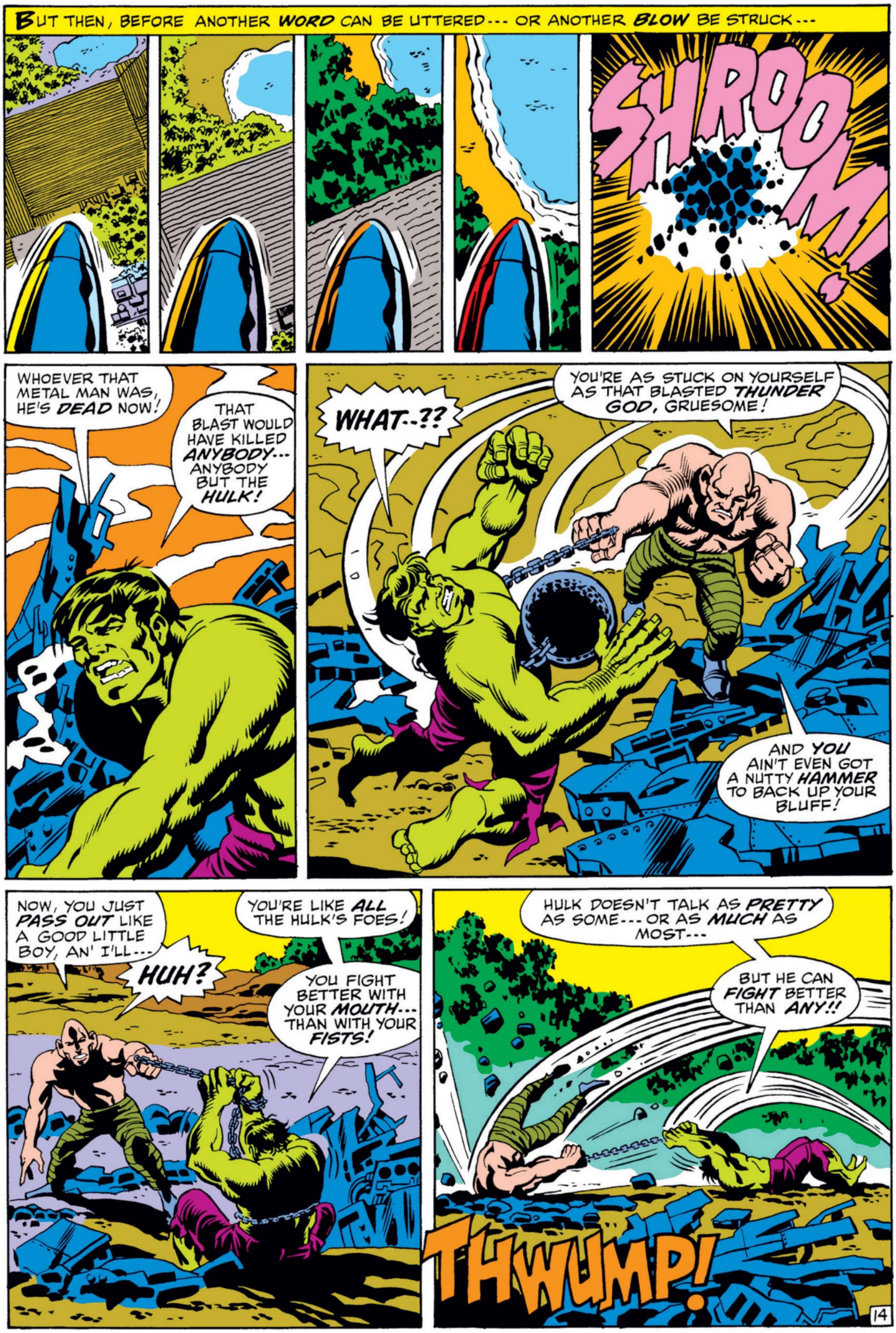

TOO BAD HE AIN'T GONNA LIVE TO TELL NOBODY ABOUT IT!!
SMAASH!

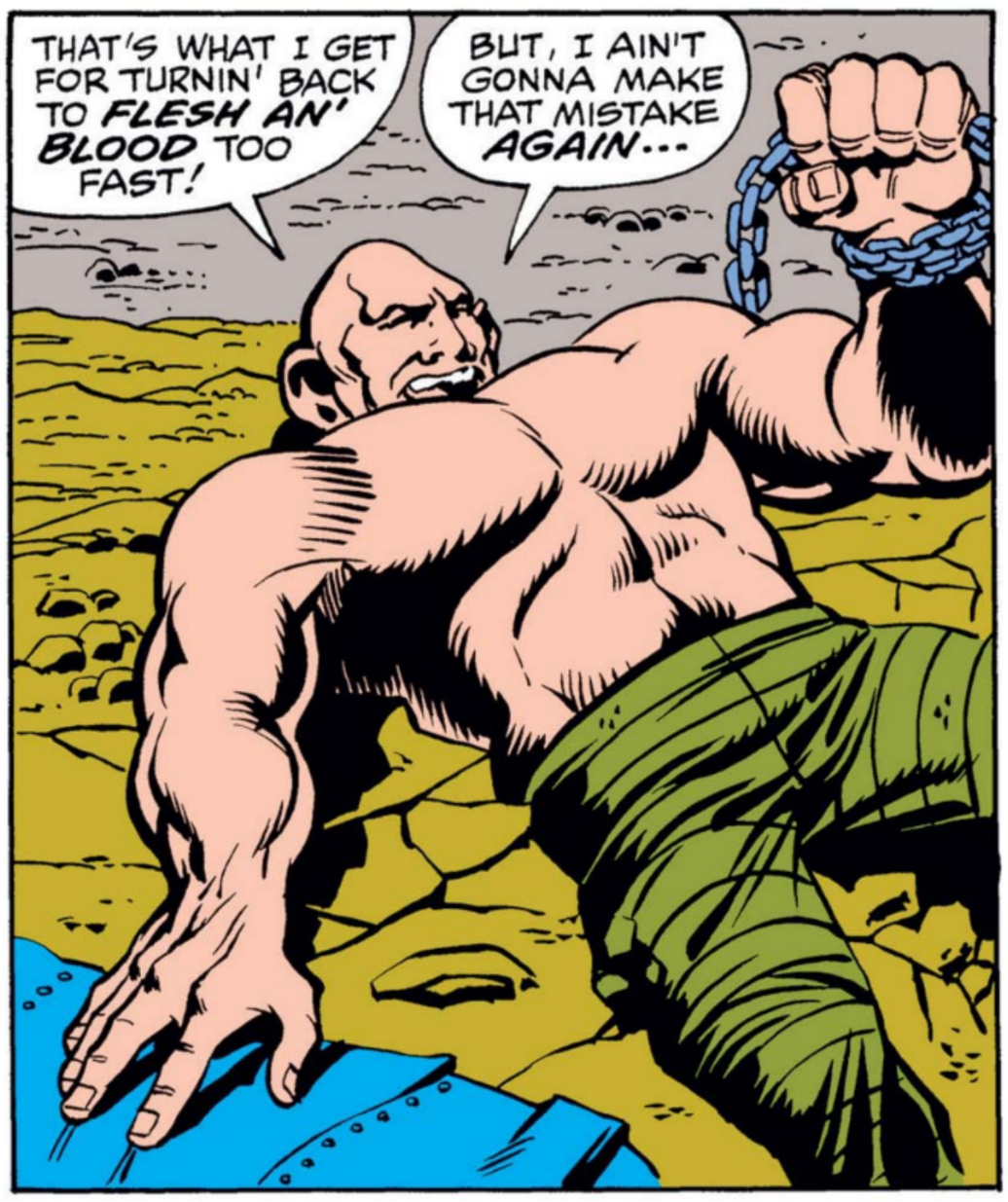
THERE! THAT LITTLE LOVE-TAP SHOULD'VE FINISHED 'IM, SO...
WHAT IN BLAZES? SOMEBODY'S CLIMBIN' UP...OUTTA THE ROCKET--!
THAT BLOW MIGHT HAVE KILLED SOME-ONE WHO WAS HUMAN...

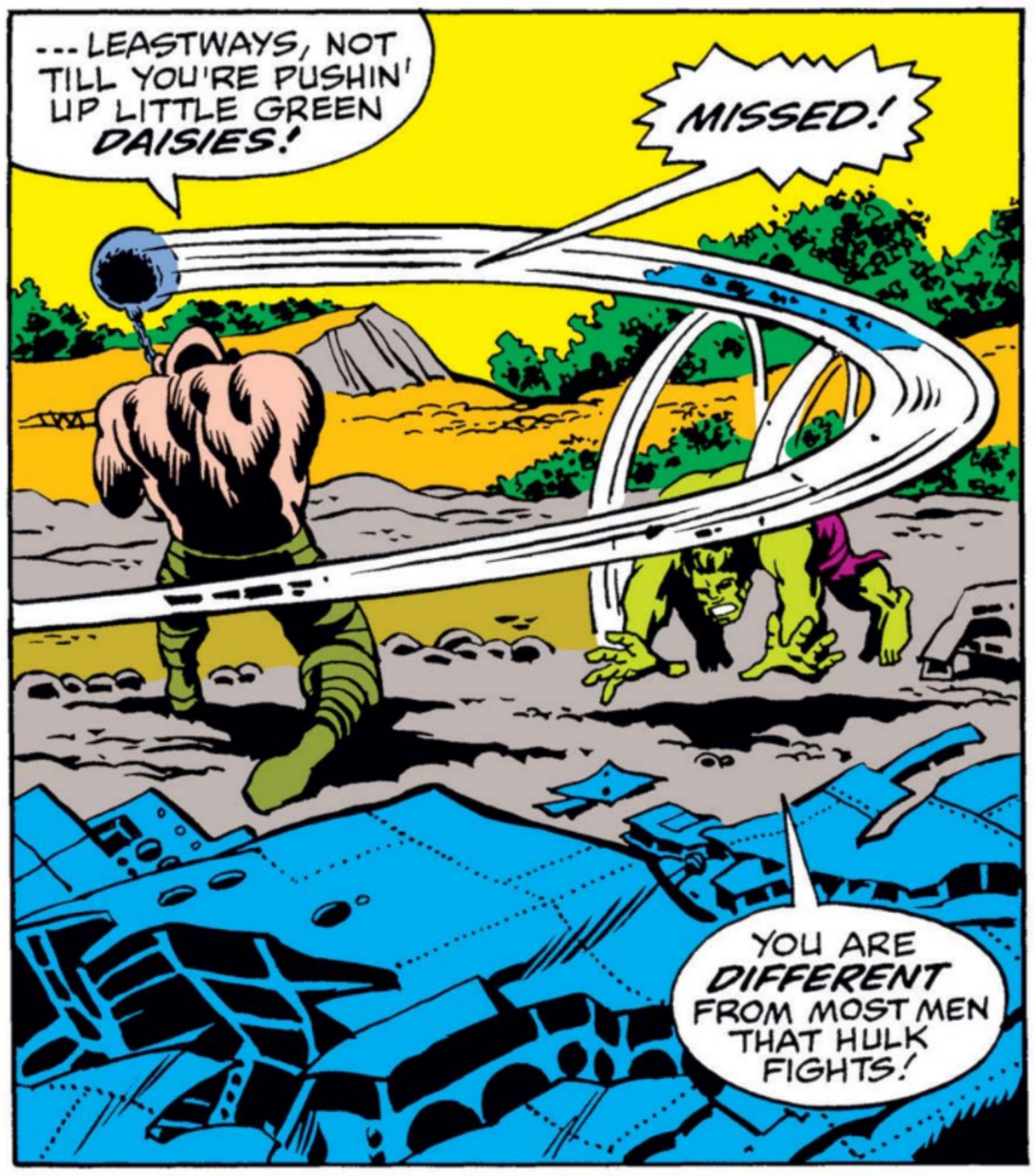
...BUT THE HULK ISN'T HUMAN!!

I DON'T KNOW HOW A GREEN-SKINNED PLUG-UGLY LIKE YOU GOT IN THAT COCKPIT...
BUT, I TRAVELED A ZILLION MILES THRU SPACE TO GET BACK TO EARTH!
AN' IF I HAFTA KILL A GUY OR TWO NOW THAT I'M HERE...

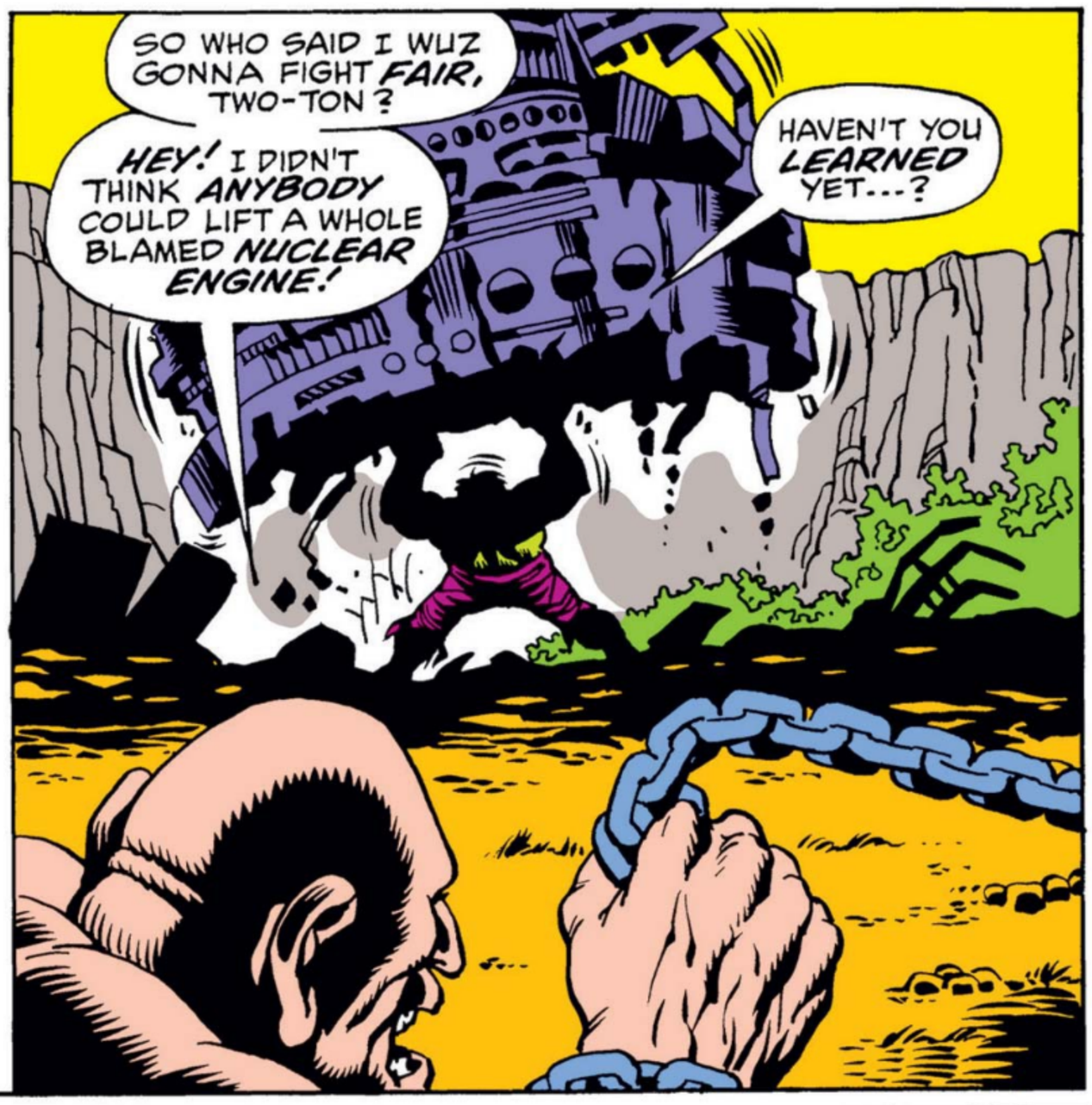

...WHY, AIN'T THAT JUST TOO BAD??

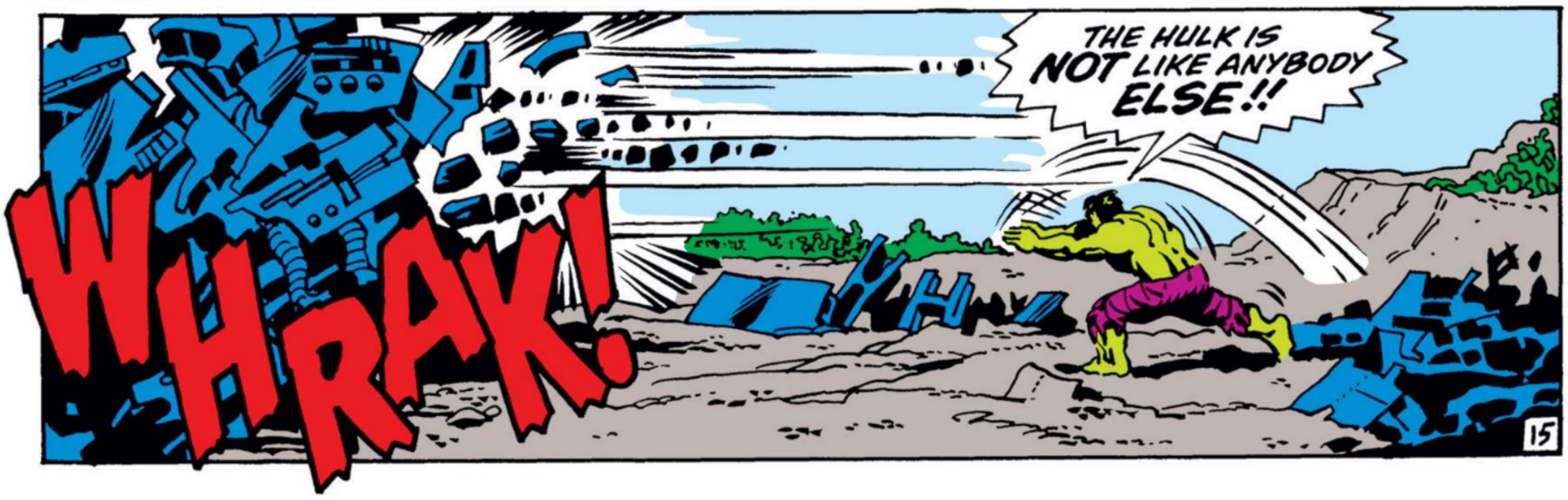

BUT THEN, BEFORE ANOTHER WORD CAN BE UTTERED--- OR ANOTHER BLOW BE STRUCK---
SHROOM!
WHOEVER THAT METAL MAN WAS, HE'S DEAD NOW!
THAT BLAST WOULD HAVE KILLED ANYBODY--- ANYBODY BUT THE HULK!
WHAT--??
YOU'RE AS STUCK ON YOURSELF AS THAT BLASTED THUNDER GOD, GRUESOME!
AND YOU AIN'T EVEN GOT A NUTTY HAMMER TO BACK UP YOUR BLUFF!
NOW, YOU JUST PASS OUT LIKE A GOOD LITTLE BOY, AN' I'LL---
YOU'RE LIKE ALL THE HULK'S FOES!
HUH?
YOU FIGHT BETTER WITH YOUR MOUTH--- THAN WITH YOUR FISTS!
HULK DOESN'T TALK AS PRETTY AS SOME--- OR AS MUCH AS MOST---
BUT HE CAN FIGHT BETTER THAN ANY!!
THWUMP!


THAT'S WHAT I GET FOR TURNIN' BACK TO FLESH AN' BLOOD TOO FAST!
BUT, I AIN'T GONNA MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN...


...LEASTWAYS, NOT TILL YOU'RE PUSHIN' UP LITTLE GREEN DAISIES!
MISSED!
YOU ARE DIFFERENT FROM MOST MEN THAT HULK FIGHTS!

BUT, YOU ARE STILL A MAN!
AND NO MAN CAN BEAT THE HULK IN A FAIR FIGHT... NO MAN!


SO WHO SAID I WUZ GONNA FIGHT FAIR, TWO-TON?
HEY! I DIDN'T THINK ANYBODY COULD LIFT A WHOLE BLAMED NUCLEAR ENGINE!
HAVEN'T YOU LEARNED YET...?


WHRAK!
THE HULK IS NOT LIKE ANYBODY ELSE!!

NO, YOU AIN'T... 'CAUSE YOU'RE SO STUPID IT'S DOWNRIGHT FUNNY!
OTHERWISE YOU'D HAVE FIGURED OUT THAT I WANTED YOU TO TOSS THAT ENGINE MY WAY...
SO I COULD ABSORB THE ENERGY IT WAS STILL RADIATIN'...

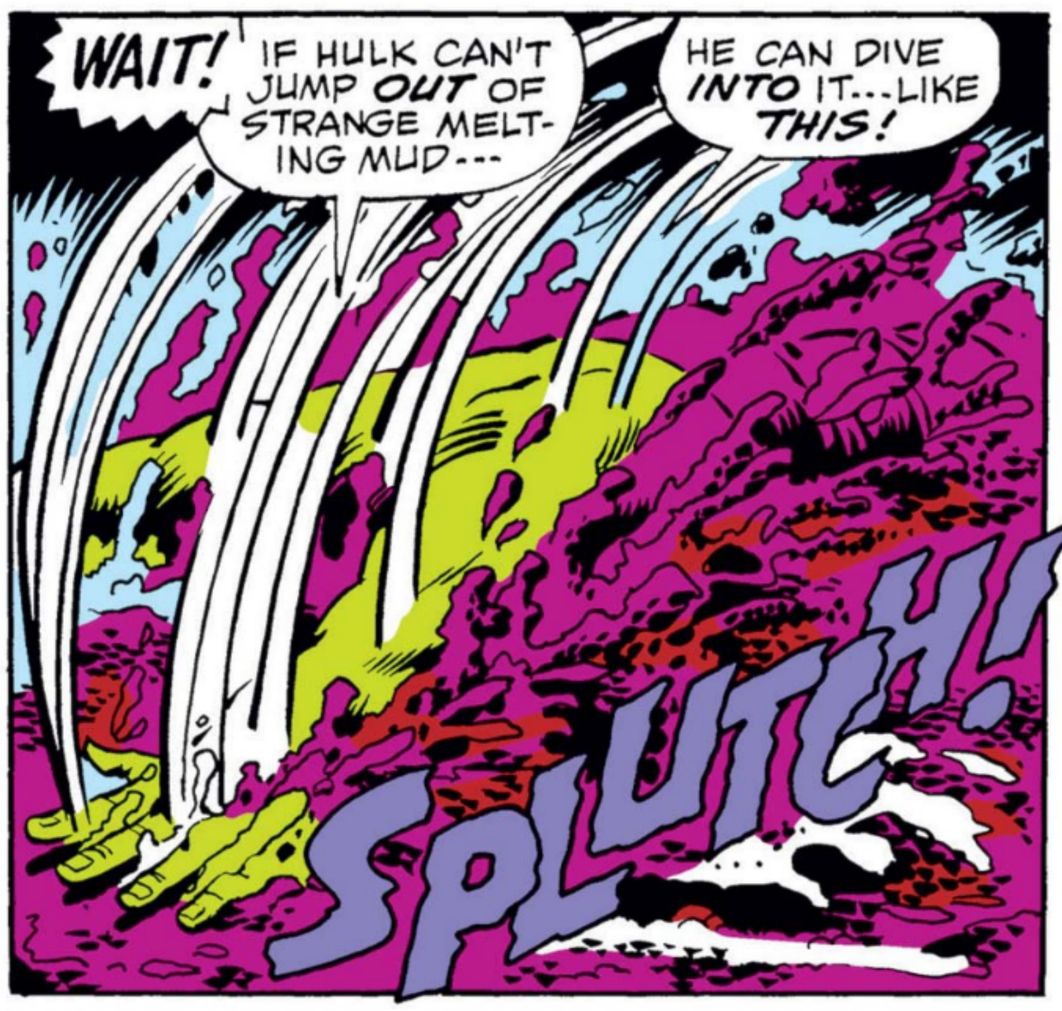
...AN' BE ABLE TO DO... THIS!!
SKRUNNCH!

HE STUCK HIS HANDS INTO THE GROUND...AND THE EARTH IS MELTING...
...MELTING ALL AROUND HULK'S FEET!
HULK IS... SINKING... CAN'T EVEN JUMP...!

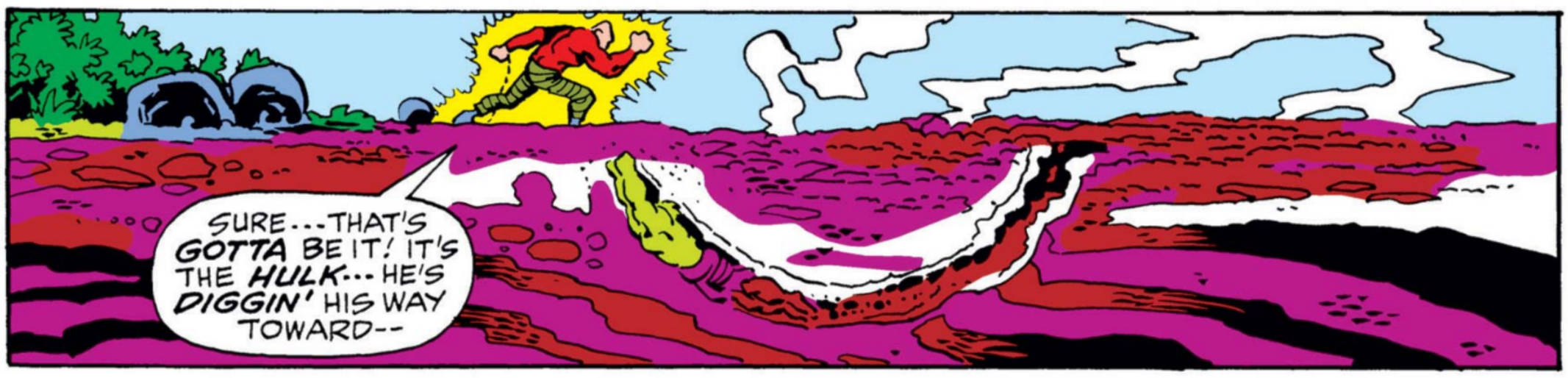
THIS IS THE WAY IT HADDA END, CREEP...
...FROM THE MINNIT YOU TANGLED WITH THE ABSORBING MAN!
SO... AT LAST, HULK KNOWS... THE NAME OF THE ONE HE FIGHTS!

BUT, THAT WON'T HELP HULK...
...AS HE SINKS INTO THIS RED-HOT MUD... DEEPER, DEEPER!

MUST THINK OF SOMETHING... SOMETHING THAT WILL SAVE HULK...
BUT, IT'S ALWAYS SO HARD... SO HARD TO THINK..!
GIVE IT UP, GREENIE! YOU AIN'T CUT OUT FOR IT!


WAIT!
IF HULK CAN'T JUMP OUT OF STRANGE MELTING MUD---
HE CAN DIVE INTO IT---LIKE THIS!
SPLUTCH!

HE'S GONE---AND THAT'S THE SAME KIND'A TREATMENT I'M GONNA GIVE THOR WHEN---
WAITAMINNIT! WHY'S THE GROUND SHAKIN' UNDER ME?

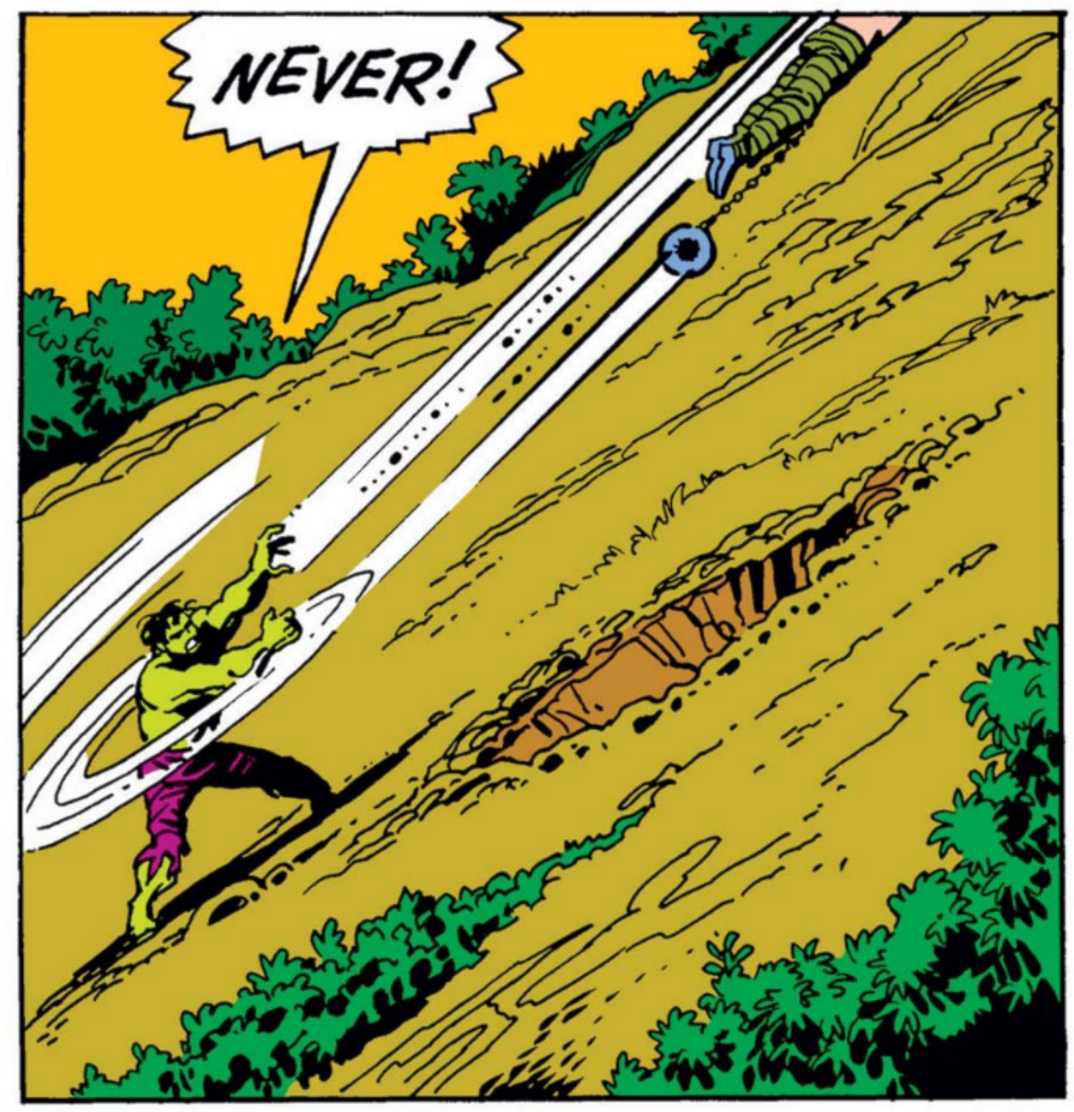

SURE---THAT'S GOTTA BE IT! IT'S THE HULK--- HE'S DIGGIN' HIS WAY TOWARD--

BRRAK!

THAT TOOK SOME OF THE FIGHT OUT OF HIM!
DON'T KNOW WHY HE WANTS TO HURT HULK ---WHY HE WON'T LEAVE HULK ALONE!

BUT, IF HE WANTS A FIGHT---
HULK WILL GIVE IT TO HIM!

AND WHEN HULK IS THRU, ABSORBING MAN WILL NEVER FIGHT AGAIN---

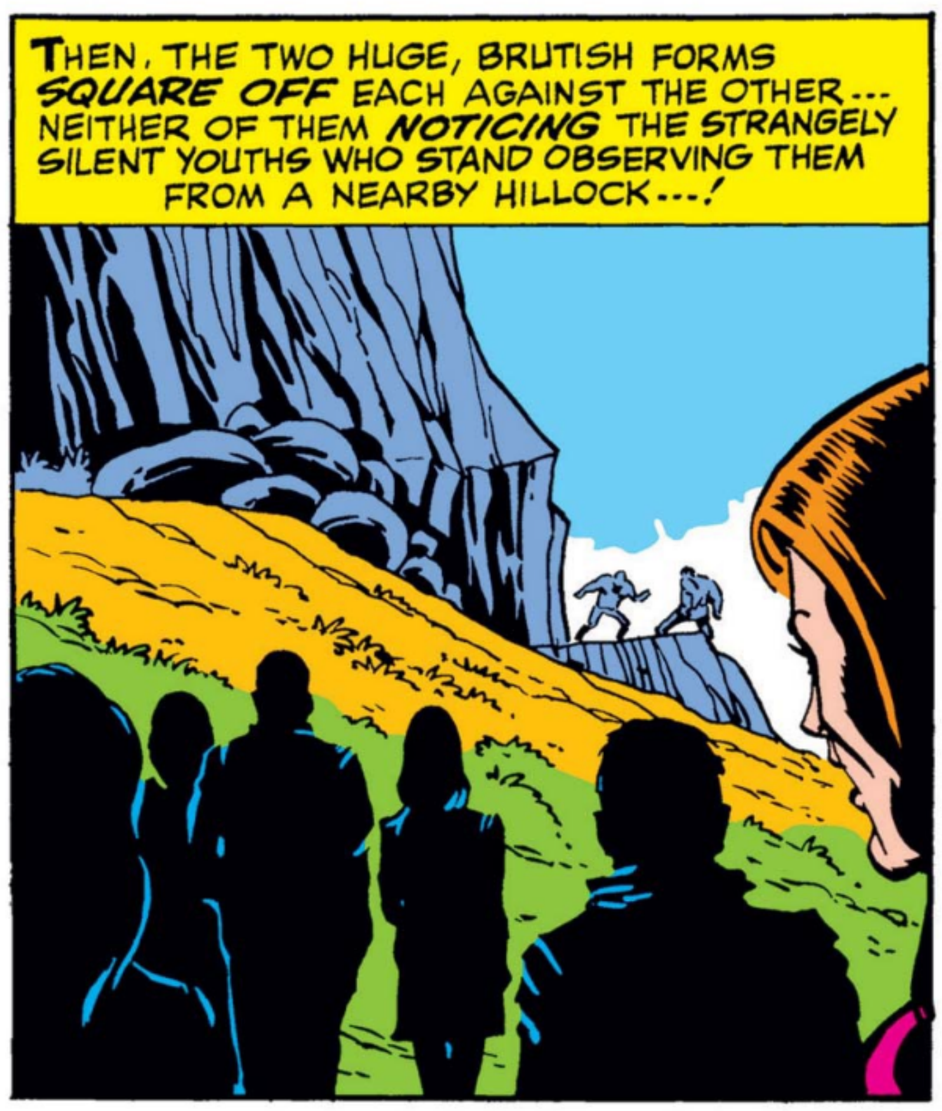

NEVER!

THAT SHEER CLIFF IN FRONT'A ME---!
NO! NOOOO!!

KUH-
KOOM!

NOW MAYBE HULK WILL KNOW PEACE AGAIN! MAYBE---
NO! IT CAN'T BE! HULK CAN'T BELIEVE HIS EYES--!

ALMOST BLEW MY COOL A MINNIT AGO, GRUESOME!
BUT, SOON AS I REMEMBERED WHO I WUZ---AND WHAT I WUZ---
I KNEW THE IMPACT WOULD ONLY TURN ME INTO...SOLID STONE!
NOW GET READY TO MEET YER MAKER... 'CAUSE IT'S TIME FOR THE FINAL ROUND!!


THEN, THE TWO HUGE, BRUTISH FORMS SQUARE OFF EACH AGAINST THE OTHER... NEITHER OF THEM NOTICING THE STRANGELY SILENT YOUTHS WHO STAND OBSERVING THEM FROM A NEARBY HILLOCK...!

SO...YOU DARE TO THREATEN HULK AGAIN!
WELL, THIS WILL BE THE LAST TIME... JUST LIKE YOU SAID!

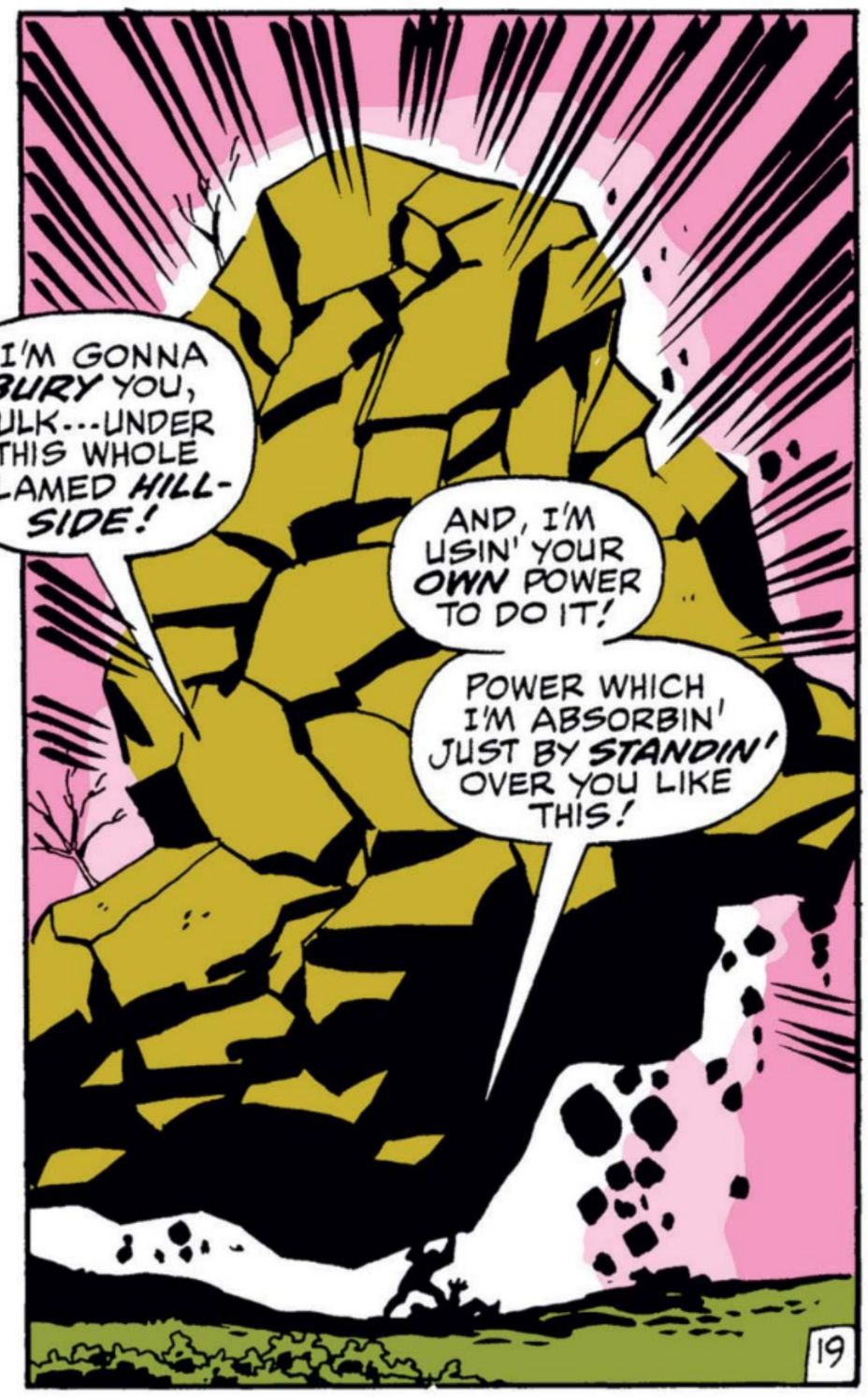
THAT PUNY BALL AND CHAIN WON'T HELP YOU AGAINST...THE HULK!
I WUZN'T AIMIN' FOR IT TO, DUM-DUM...
'CAUSE, I JUST RE-MEMBERED SOMETHIN' I NEVER SHOULD'A FERGOT!

I CAN ABSORB THE STRENGTH OF LIVIN' THINGS...AS EASILY AS METAL OR ROCK!
THAT MEANS I CAN ADD YOUR MIGHT...TO MY OWN!
AND NOBODY CAN BEAT SOMEBODY WHO'S ALWAYS JUST A LITTLE BIT STRONGER THAN THEY ARE ...NOBODY!

DOWN...DOWN THE BATTLING HULK IS FORCED, UNTIL...
HE'S FALLEN... AND THAT MAKES ME THE FIRST MAN ALIVE EVER TO BEAT THE HULK!

AND, I'M ALSO GONNA BE THE LAST!
KRUKK

AND, AS THE FEW ON-LOOKERS STARE IN STARK DISBELIEF...

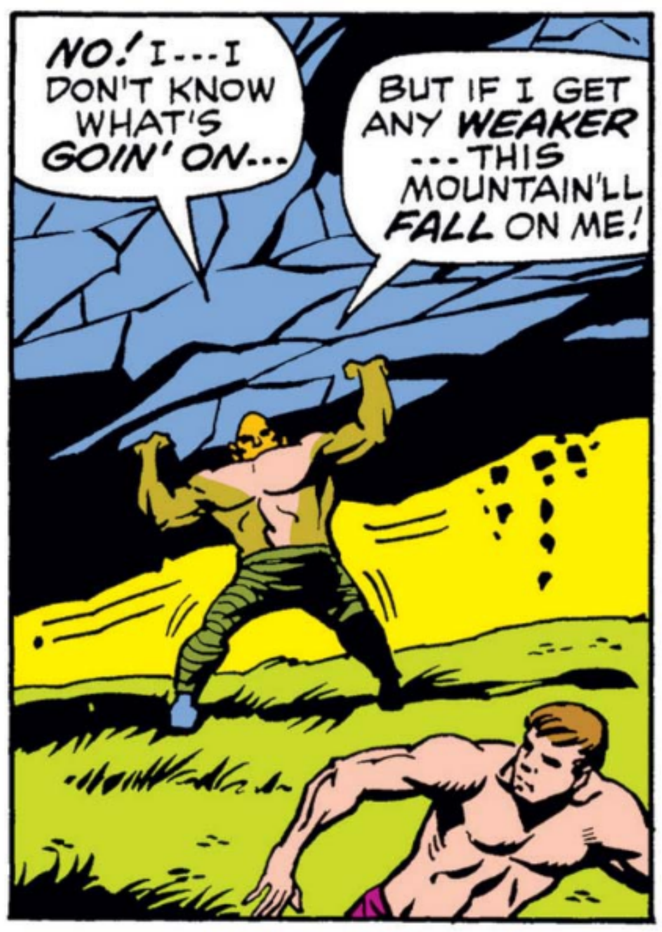

I'M GONNA BURY YOU, HULK...UNDER THIS WHOLE BLAMED HILL-SIDE!
AND, I'M USIN' YOUR OWN POWER TO DO IT!
POWER WHICH I'M ABSORBIN' JUST BY STANDIN' OVER YOU LIKE THIS!

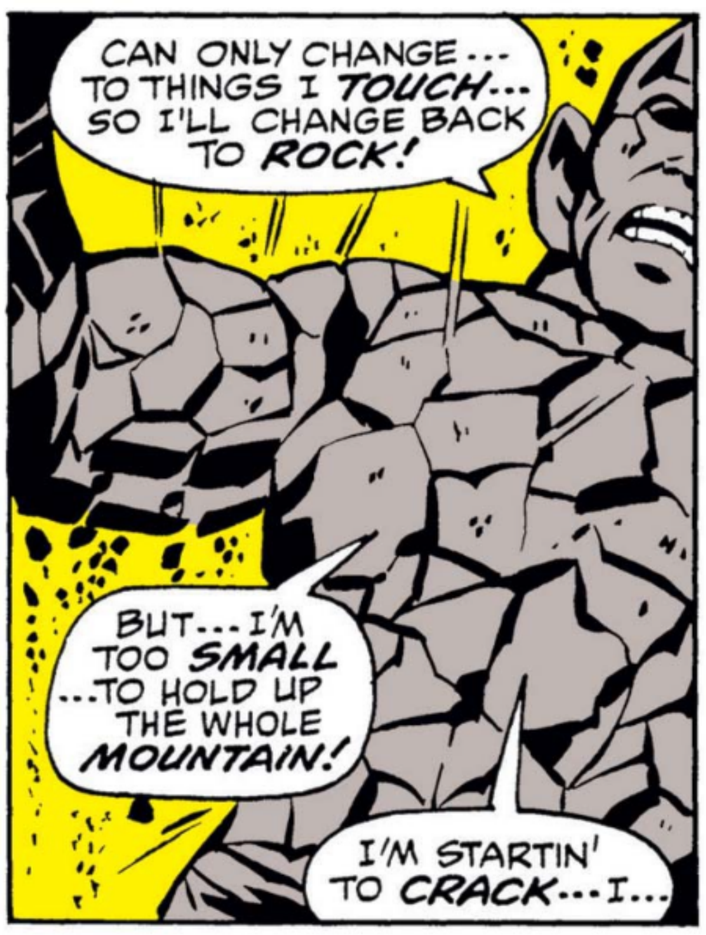
HOWEVER, UNKNOWN TO CRUSHER CREEL, IT WAS NOT HIS OWN STRENGTH ALONE WHICH CAUSED THE HULK TO WEAKEN AND FALL...
...BUT A FAMILIAR CHEMICAL CHANGE WITHIN HIS BODY---

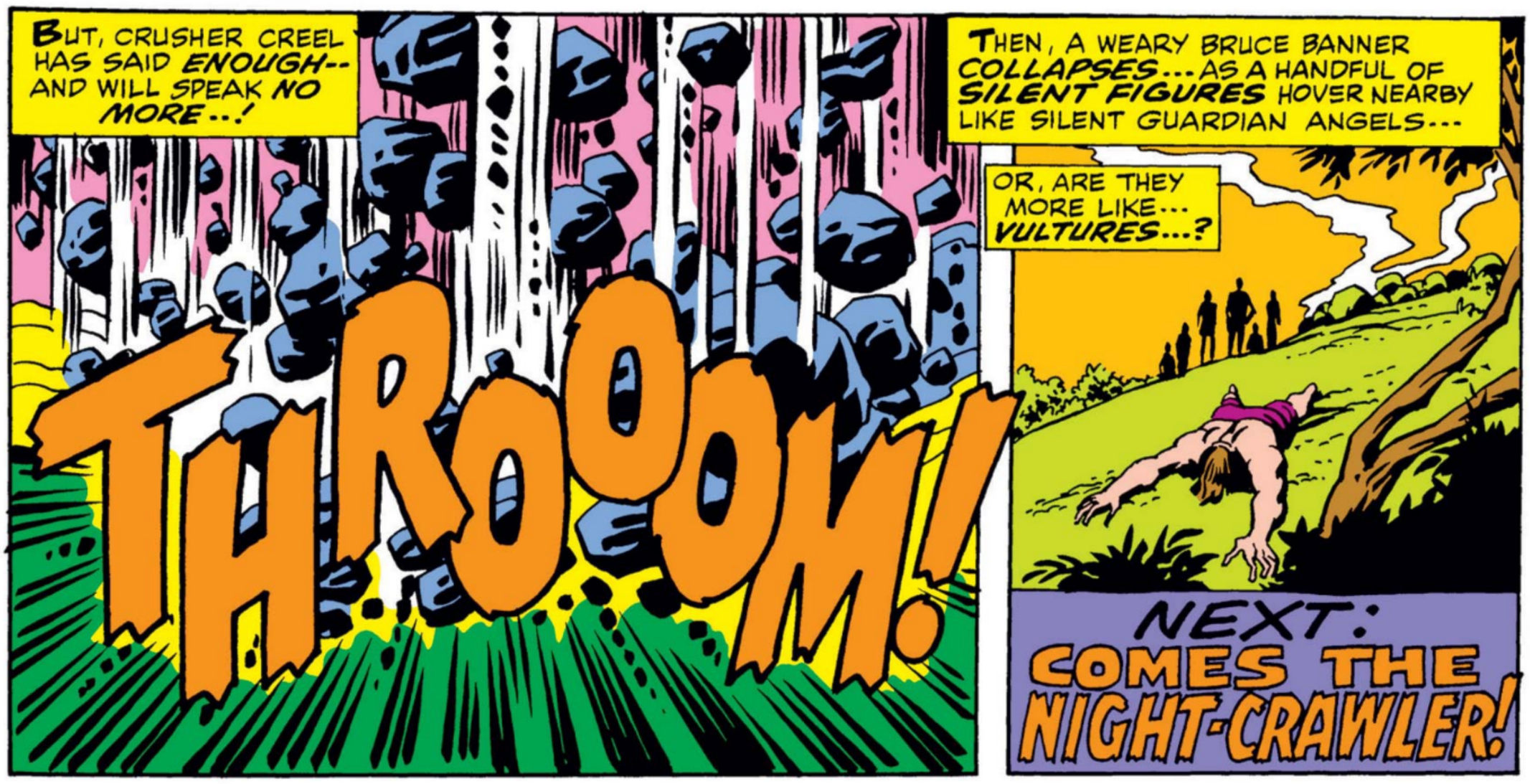
---A CHANGE WHICH, EVEN NOW, IS RAPIDLY TRANSFORMING HIM INTO THE MAN CALLED---BRUCE BANNER---!

AND, IF THE HULK'S STRENGTH WANES...CAN THE ABSORBING MAN'S BE FAR BEHIND..?
WH--WHAT'S HAPPENIN' TO ME?
I'M STARTIN' TO FEEL...WEAK AS A BLASTED KITTEN--!

THAT'S---BECAUSE THERE'S NO MORE HULK ---FOR YOU TO SIPHON POWER FROM!
IN A MOMENT--- YOU'LL BE-- ON YOUR OWN---!


NO! I---I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOIN' ON...
BUT IF I GET ANY WEAKER ---THIS MOUNTAIN'LL FALL ON ME!


CAN ONLY CHANGE--- TO THINGS I TOUCH--- SO I'LL CHANGE BACK TO ROCK!
BUT---I'M TOO SMALL ...TO HOLD UP THE WHOLE MOUNTAIN!
I'M STARTIN' TO CRACK---I...


BUT, CRUSHER CREEL HAS SAID ENOUGH-- AND WILL SPEAK NO MORE--!
THROOM!
THEN, A WEARY BRUCE BANNER COLLAPSES...AS A HANDFUL OF SILENT FIGURES HOVER NEARBY LIKE SILENT GUARDIAN ANGELS---
OR, ARE THEY MORE LIKE--- VULTURES...?
NEXT: COMES THE NIGHT-CRAWLER!